

D A V I D E I S.

T H E
L I F E
O F

D A V I D

K I N G · o f I S R A E L :

A
Sacred P O E M :

In F I V E B O O K S.

By T H O M A S E L L W O O D.

The Third Edition; Corrected.

Scribimus Indocti Doctique Poemata——Hor.

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T O T H E

R E A D E R.

WHEN first I began the following POEM, I was so far from thinking of the Press, that I aimed no farther than to describe, and that for my own Diversion only, the Monomachie, or single Combat, between the Giant and the Stripling, great Goliath and little David.

After I had, in such Sort as it is, performed that, I was drawn on, insensibly, as it were, to set forth the noble Friendship, which, upon the great Atchievement of David's, was contracted between Prince Jonathan and him; with the Effects of both, the Advancement of David to Places of Honour, Trust and Power, and his brave Discharge thereof, in the Service of his King and Country. Which, as it gained him the great Love of the People, so it procur'd him the high Displeasure of the King: and, as consequent thereof, the Troubles he afterwards went through.

Having attended him so far in his Prosperity and Greatness, I could not find in my

A 2

Heart

Heart, methought, to leave him in his Adversity and depressed State ; but accompanying him through his Sufferings under Saul, I waited on him, 'till I had seen him fairly settled on the Throne of Israel.

*There again I made a Stand, as willing to have made that the Bound of my Undertaking. But after I had paus'd a while, look'd back, and view'd the Steps I had taken ; observ'd from what a low Beginning, through what extream Difficulties and Hardships, to what a towring Pitch of Height and Glory our Hero was advanced : and considered also, how soon this great and mighty Monarch, this excellent Man, through a suddain Temptation of Lust, excited by the alluring Bait of Beauty, fell into those gross and bainous Sins of Adultery and Murther ; I could not forbear to display that Part of his Life also, as foreseeing there might some useful Remarks be made thereon, which might be of Service to caution others. Wherefore, running hastily over the former Part of his Reign, and but lightly touching, in a general Way, his Wars and Martial Enterprises ; I entered, as directly as I well could, upon the foul Story of fair BATHSHEBA ; and as consequent thereof, the contrived Death of her abused Husband, the brave and valiant U R I A H. Which, with the better Account
of*

of David's eminent Sorrow for it, Repentance of it, Recovery from it, and Restoration to the Favour of God again, closes the Third Book.

There, indeed, I was forced to make another Stop; which, I thought would have proved a full Stop: for it lasted more than twenty Years. The POEM was begun, and so far carried on (excepting only the first Chapter of the first Book) in the Year 1688. When the Prince of Orange landing, and the Nation being in Arms; the Noise of Guns, and Sounds of Drums and Trumpets so affrighted, and disturbed my peaceful Muse, that both She for a while forsook me, and I thereupon the Work, save that, upon a Review, some Time after, observing how abruptly David was brought in; that he might not look like one of the Knights Errand of Old, rushing into a Fray with his Beavor down, that none could know either who he was, or whence he came, I added the first Chapter; thereby beginning the Story a little higher, that I might introduce my Hero with somewhat the more Advantage.

There it rested, without any Prospect of its ever going further, until the last Winter. When having less Health, and more Leisure, than at some Times before; I took it up, for an En-

tainment, to make some uneasy Hours pass somewhat less uneasily over. And after I had read it through, considering with my self, that if, after my Death, being found amongst my loose Papers, it should be committed to the Press; it could pass for, at best but an imperfect, or unfinish'd Piece: I found an Inclination of Mind, to carry on the Story, if I could, to the End of David's Life. Wherefore giving a kind Invitation to my gentle Muse to return (who, by some short Visits, on particular Occasions, in the Interval, had given me some Ground to hope, she had not quite abandoned me) I entered again upon the Subject, where I had left off; and by Degrees went thro it, 'till I had brought my warlike Hero to his peaceful Grave.

After it was finished, deliberating about the publishing of it; as whether to publish it my self, or leave it, as a Posthume, to be published (if thought fit) by some kind Hand, after my Death: the Reasons, which turn'd the Balance for present Printing were; First, that, at present the Press is open: which possibly may hereafter be shut, And, Secondly, That, if, upon the Publication of it, MOMUS should Carp (which he is but too apt to do, even where there is less Occasion for it) I might be at Hand, ready myself to Answer his Cavils; who, if any Cause be given for them, gave it: though, assuredly, without any Intention so to do.

Till

'Till I had wholly finished, and transcribed also, this Poem; I had not had the Opportunity of perusing the learned COWLEY's DAVIDEIS; though I had heard of it, and, I think, had once a transient Sight of it, before I began this. Since I have read it through, with my best Attention; and am very well pleased, that I had not read it before: lest his great Name, high Stile, and lofty Fancy should have led me, tho' unawares, into an apish Imitation of them; which doubtless would have looked very odly, and ill in me, how admirable soever in him.

His Aim and mine differ widely: the Method of each no less. He wrote for the Learned; and those two of the Upper Form: and his Flights are answerable. I write for common Readers; in a Stile familiar, and easy to be understood by such. His would have needed (if he had not added it) a large Paraphrase upon it, to explain the many difficult Passages in it. Mine, as it has none, will not, I hope, need any.

I have the same Aim in this, the same Inducement to it, as I had in writing the sacred History of both the Old and the New Testament, viz. To invite, and endeavour to draw all the Youth especially, of either Sex, to improve their Time and Studies, by employing both in reading better Books, written on better Subjects, than too many of them too often do.

I am not so wholly a Stranger to the Writings of the most celebrated Poets, as well antient as modern, as not to know, that the great Embellishments of their Poems consist mostly in their extravagant, and almost boundless Fancies; amazing, and even dazzling Flights; luxurious Inventions; wild Hyperbol's; lofty Language: with an Introduction of Angels, Spirits, Dæmons, and their respective Deities, &c. Which as not suitable to my Purpose, I industriously abstain from.

*In a Word, I am not so vain to seek Applause: I don't expect to be commended. If Criticks, on the one Hand, and Carpers on the other, will give me leave to pass the Streets quietly, without Quarrelling, or Jostling: 'tis all I ask at their Hands. I don't affect the Title of Poet. Let 'em call me, in that respect, what they please. The learned, and good natur'd, will, I hope, be favourable in their Censures: The Ignorant and crabbed I regard not. I am more modest, than to expect Admission amongst the best Poets; and yet think it a little below me, to be ranked with the very worst. Nec Suffænus sum, nec inscribo Praxitelem. I am content to walk, if I may be allowed, in the * middle Way; where*

* In Medio Vertus:
Medio Tutissimus ibis.

the safest Walking is, and where I shall be sure to find VIRTUE: than whom I desire no better Company.

DAVIDEIS.

DAVIDEIS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

*I sing the Life of David, Israel's King !
Assist, thou sacred Pow'r, who did'st him bring
From the Sheepfold, and set him on the Throne ;
Thee I invoke, on Thee rely alone.
Breathe on my Muse ; and fill her slender Quill
With thy refreshing Dews from Hermon-Hill :
That what she sings may turn unto thy Praise,
And to thy Name may lasting Trophies raise.*

AFTER King Saul had (by the Sin he wrought
In *Amalek*) divine Displeasure brought
Upon himself, and so the Lord provok'd
(Though his Offence he with *Religion* cloak'd)
That God of his *Promotion* did repent,
And, in *Decree*, the Kingdom from him rent ;
Whilst the good Prophet, on his mournful String,
Bewail'd the destin'd *Downfal* of the King :
God to him did his sacred Herald call
(*Sam'el*, by whom he had anointed Saul)

And

And said, How long for *Saul* do'tt mean to mourn?
Up, quickly fill with sacring Oyl thy Horn:
To *Bethlemithe Jesse*, I intend
Thee, on a special Errand strait to send;
For I, among his Sons, provided have
A King, who shall my People rule and save.

Though to the Prophet it was fully known,
That God had *Saul* determin'd to dethrone,
And raise another (for himself did bring
From God th' unwelcome Sentence to the King :)
Yet did this dang'rous Errand him surprize;
And, smit with Fear, How can I go! he cries.
Jealous *Saul* should of the Bus'ness hear,
My Head must pay for mine Offence, I fear.
The Lord, a gracious Master, fully knew
The Prophet's Heart was firm, upright and true;
And that his *Fear* from *Frailty* did arise,
A fair *Expedient* for him did devise.
Go, go, said he, an Heifer with thee take;
And say, I come a Sacrifice to make
Unto the Lord: Call *Jesse* thereunto;
And I will then direct thee what to do.
Go, entertain no Fear, but Fear of me,
And him anoint, whom I shall shew to thee.

Away went *Samuel*. And, to *Bethlem* come,
Conven'd the Elders of the Place; on whom
A Trembling fell, a dreadful pannick Fear,
Lest some great Ill had drawn the Prophet there:

Wherefore

Wherefore they ask'd him, if he came in *Peace*.
He answ'ring, *Yes*: their *Fears* did quickly cease.
He told them then, He came to hold a Feast
Unto the Lord (that Love might be increas'd
Among them.) Bid them haste, and sanctifie
Themselves, that to the Feast they might draw nigh.

Then unto *Jesse's* House the Prophet went,
Upon his special Errand most intent.
Amongst his Sons when *Eliab* he espy'd,
This must be he, within himself he cry'd:
For *Eliab* was the Eldest, stout and tall,
A fit Successor, he might think, for *Saul*?
He therefore said, surely, *the Lord's* anointed
Is now before him: This hath he appointed.

But God thus check'd him. Look not at the Face,
Nor outward Stature: But the inward Grace.
I view not Man, like Man: th' external Part
He looks upon; but I regard the Heart.
The Prophet, thus instructed, now no more
Consults weak Reason, as he did before:
But when old *Jesse* had before him set
Sev'n of his Sons, all proper Persons; yet
The Prophet, to his Guide now keeping close,
Told him, the Lord had chosen none of those.

Sure these are not thy all, the Prophet cry'd;
No, One there still remains, old *Jess'* reply'd,
My youngest Son; my Shepherd's Place he fills,
And tends his Fleecy Charge on distant Hills.

Send,

Send, fetch him, said the Prophet, quickly home,
For we will not sit down until he come.

A speedy Messenger for *David* flies,
And brings the sprightly Youth before their Eyes;
A rosy Bloom adorn'd his comely Face,
Sweet to behold, and Manly with a Grace:
Before the Prophet, *Jesse* makes him stand,
The Prophet soon receiv'd the Lord's Command;
Arise, anoint the Youth, for this is he:
And *Samuel* streight approach'd, with bended Knee,
Assum'd his Horn, and on young *David's* Head,
The consecrating Oil did freely shed.

From that Day forward, upon *David* came
The Spirit of the Lord; which might proclaim,
To well-discerning Eyes, his Unction: as
Of *Saul's* Rejection a sure Token 'twas,
That the good Spirit did from him depart,
And to an evil Spirit left his Heart.

This evil Spirit from the Lord is said
On *Saul* to come: and it such Trouble made
To *Saul*, and all his Servants; that they thought
The best expedient was, there should be sought
Some skilful Man, who on his Harp might play;
And drive that Spirit, for the Time, away.
This they propose. He shews a ready Mind
To try it: bids them such an Harper find.
One mention'd *David*; whom he thus set forth:
A cunning Player, and a Man of Worth;

Valiant

BOOK I. D A V I D E I S.

5

Valiant and wise ; a comely Person ; one
To whom the Lord had special Favour shown.

This pleased *Saul* ; to *Jesse* straight he sent
To fetch young *David* ; *David* quickly went.
A tender Kid the chearful Youth did bring,
With Bread, and Wine, a Present for the King.

His Office is assigned him, to stand
Before the King ; and with a skilful Hand,
When *Saul* was troubled, on his Harp to play,
And when he play'd, the Sp'rite was drove away.

This made him dear to *Saul*. *Saul* quickly found
The *Benefit*, which did to him redound
From the sweet *Harper's* Musick. For the sake
Whereof, he did him *Armour-Bearer* make.
A Martial Office 'twas, to bear the *Sbield*
Of *Saul*, when he should march into the Field.
Which shews, he found the Youth as well could wield
His Arms (a *Lance*, or *Spear*, and massy *Sbield*)
And thereby, if Occasion were, defend
His Person, and, in need, due Succour lend :
As softly strike upon the tuneful String ;
And by harmonious Lays relieve the King.
Unwilling therefore, *David* should return,
Lest he his Absence might have Cause to mourn,
He sent again to *Jesse*, to request
That, with his Leave, he might be longer blest

With

With *David's* Service; that he might be freed
From his Affliction: *Jesse* soon agreed.

CHAP. II.

WHile *Saul* yet reign'd (altho' by God rejected,
Because he had the Lord's Command neglected)
The bold *Philistines*, with a mighty Host,
Made an Invasion upon *Judah's* Coast:
Whom to repel (when *Saul* the Danger knew)
The Men of *Isr'el* he together drew.

Upon two *Hills* the War-like Camps were seen,
A *Valley* lying in the midst between.
Each Army standing in Battalia rang'd,
Before a Blow, on either Side, was chang'd;
From the *Philistine* Camp, a Champion bold,
Came proudly daring, dreadful to behold.
Upon his scowling Brow sat fuming Wrath;
His Name, *Goliab*; and his City, *Gath*.
In height he was six Cubits and a Span:
In truth a Monster, rather than a Man.
He on his Head a brazen Helmet ware,
Too great for any Head, but his, to bear.
And in a Coat of Mail he was array'd,
That of fine Brass, five Thousand Shekles weigh'd.
His shoulders did a brazen Target bear,
And on his Legs he Greaves of Brass did wear.

The

The *Staff* too of his *Spear* full well might seem,
 For Bigness, to have been a *Weaver's Beam*.
 The Head, whereof, alone ('tis strange to say)
Six Hundred Shekles did, of Iron weigh.
 Before him went his *Squire*, who bore his Shield;
 Too huge for any, but himself to wield.

Advancing forward tow'ards the Camp of *Saul*,
 To *Israel's Armies* he aloud did call;
 And to this Purpose spake, ' What need ye try
 ' The Fortune of a Battle? Am not I,
 ' A *Philistine*? You, Servants unto *Saul*?
 ' Choose you a Man, the stoutest of you all;
 ' If he be able me, in Fight, to slay,
 ' Then we henceforth will your Commands obey:
 ' But if, in single Combat, I prevail,
 ' And kill him; you to serve us shall not fail.
 ' Come, shew your Courage: let it now appear,
 ' Ye have, at least, one Man, that's void of Fear.
 ' All *Israel's Armies* I, this Day, defy:
 ' Give me a Man, that may my Prowess try.'

Thus, forty Days together, did he brave
 The *Israelites*; yet none an Answer gave,
 For *Saul* himself was dreadfully afraid;
 And the whole Host of *Israel* sore dismay'd.

While thus this Son of Earth did proudly vaunt,
 And, with his Looks, an Host of *Hebrews* daunt,
 It so fell out, or rather God so wrought,
 That little *David* to the Camp was brought:

David

David, old *Jesse's* Son, the *Ephrathite*,
Fitter, in shew, to follow Sheep, than Fight.

Sev'n other Sons had *Jesse*: Eight in all.
The eldest Three were serving under *Saul*.
To see how well they fair'd, and how Things went,
The good old Man, his youngest, *David*, sent,
Not empty handed. *David* early rose,
And to the Camp, with Victuals, laded goes:
Yet not without providing One to keep,
'Till he return'd, his Father's Flock of Sheep.

Just as the Host, to fight was going out,
And, for the Signal, did, to Battle, shout;
Came *David* to the Trench: with Haste he ran
To find his Brethren, e'er the Fight began.
And, as with them he talking stood, anon
Came forth the *Philistine's* bold *Champion*,
Enclos'd in Brass; and, with an hideous Cry,
Denounc'd his Challenge then, as formerly.
At Sight of whom, a Sight that carried Dread,
The Men of *Israel* to their Trenches fled.

No sooner heard young *David* the Defy,
But brave Disdain did sparkle in his Eye.
His Mettle rose, his Breast with Courage swell'd,
He scarce himself, from falling on with-held.
That Spirit which, from God, upon him came
At his *Anointing*, now doth more enflame
His Heart with holy Zeal; and doth him bear
Above the Sense of *Danger* and of *Fear*.

He

He could not brook, that one, *uncircumcis'd*,
Defying *Israel*, should go unchastis'd.
He talk'd with one ; he turn'd him to another,
(Not daunted with the Chidings of his Brother)
He let them, both by Word and Gesture, know,
He durst against the great *Goliath* go.

The Rumour of him reach'd the Royal Tent,
And from the King a Messenger was sent,
To bring him to him. In he nimbly stept,
And said, O King, *The Challenge I accept*.
Let no Man's Courage fail ; for in the Might
Of God, I with this *Philistine* will Fight.

Alas! said *Saul* (when he observ'd the Lad,
A Shepherd-Swain, all in Sheep's Ruffet clad)
To fight with him thou art too weak by far,
Thou but a *Youth*, and he a *Man of War*.
Cast Fear away, O King, the Youth reply'd,
He's strong who has th' Almighty on his Side.
I Fear the God of *Isr'el*, and have found,
Young tho' I am, his Strength, in Need, abound.
Thy Servant slew a *Lion*, and a *Bear*,
That from my Father's Flock, a Lamb did tear.
And, since this *Philistine* hath, in his Pride,
The Armies of the Living God defy'd ;
Th' uncircumcised *Wretch* no more shall be,
Than was the *Lion*, or the *Bear*, to me.
The Lord, who from the Bear's and Lion's Paw
Did me preserve, because I lov'd his Law ;

B

Will,

Will, I believe, as in his Fear I stand,
Preserve me safe from this great *Giant's* Hand.

The King amaz'd, yet glad withal, to find,
In such a Straight, so well resolv'd a Mind,
Gives his Consent, and prays the Lord to bless
His *little* Combatant with great Success.
Himself, with his own Armour, *David* arms,
To render him the more secure from Harms.
Upon his *Head* an *Helmet* he doth put
Of massy Brass, through which no Sword could cut;
Then loads him also with a *Coat of Mail*,
Which, having oft been try'd, did never fail.
On this Array, his Sword did *David* gird,
And then essay'd to go; but when he stirr'd,
He too unweildly was, he found, to move;
Nor durst he fight in Arms he did not prove.
Saul's Armour, therefore, *David* did refuse.
Who fights for God, must not Man's Weapons use.
Saul's Armour, therefore, leaving in his Tent,
He took his trusty Staff, and out he went,
His *Sling* in t'other Hand: and, as he goes,
He *five smooth Stones* out of the *Valley*, chose,
Opens his *Scrip*, and puts the Stones therein;
And then draws near unto the *Philistin*.

The *Giant* rolling round his staring Eyes,
At length the little *Hebrew* coming spies.
At whom his haughty Breast with Scorn did swell,
And with such Words as these he on him fell:

‘ Am

‘ Am I a Dog, thou despicable *Boy*,
‘ That thou attempts me thus with Staves t’ annoy?
‘ Come hither, Sirrah, and thy *Flesh*, for Meat,
‘ I’ll give unto the Fowls, and Beasts to eat.’
Then by his Gods (what could he mention worse !
He belches out an execrable *Curse*,
So loud, as if he meant the *Vale* to shake,
And cause the *Savage* Beasts themselves to quake.

When he had ended, *David* did begin,
And answer’d thus, the haughty *Philistin*.

‘ Thou com’st to me with *Sword*, and *Shield*,
 and *Spear*,
‘ But I, to thee, come in the *Name* and *Fear*
‘ Of God, the Lord of *Hosts*, by thee defy’d,
‘ The God of *Isr’el*, to chastise thy Pride.
‘ This Day, I trust, into my Hand he’ll give
‘ Thy sever’d Head ; no longer shalt thou live.
‘ Of all your Host the Carcases, this Day,
‘ Shall to the *Fowls* and *Beasts* be made a *Prey* ;
‘ That all, who on the spacious Earth do dwell,
‘ May know there is a God in *Israel*.
‘ And to this whole Assembly ’t shall appear,
‘ That not by *Sword* the Lord doth save, nor *Spear*.
‘ The Lord our God, the Battle doth command,
‘ And he will give you up into our Hand.’

So spake th’ undaunted Youth. And at that Word
Th’ enraged *Giant* was so thoroughly stirr’d,

That forth he step'd, and lifting up his Spear,
With direful Threats, to *David* he drew near.
To meet him *David* still advanc'd as fast,
And from his *Sling*, a Stone he swiftly cast,
So rightly aim'd, and with a Force so strong,
It pierc'd his Brain, and fell'd him all along:
Prostrate he sprawling lay, the bruised Earth,
Receiv'd with Trembling, her Gigantic Birth.
No sooner *David* this Advantage spies,
But o'er the Vale, he, like the Light'ning flies:
While stretch'd upon the Ground the Monster lay,
Like some great Mole of Earth, or Bank of Clay,
The nimble Victor, laying by his Sling,
Did on his massy Shoulders lightly spring,
Where Standing, forth the Giant's Sword he drew,
And therewith did his Neck assunder hew.

Thus with a Sling and Stone did *David* smite,
And slay *Goliab*, in a single Fight.
O dext'rous Slinger, who the Prize might win
From the * *Left-banded* Sons of *Benjamin*!
Nay, rather let the Praise to him alone
Ascribed be, who guided Hand and Stone!

The Challenge answer'd thus, the Conquest won,
In Sight of both the Armies looking on;

* *Judges*, xx. 16.

The Monster's Head, still reeking in its Gore,
In Triumph then, victorious *David* bore.

Him thus returning, Captain *Abner* meets,
Embraces and affectionately greets :
Extols his fearless Valour to the Sky,
And gratulates his happy Victory.

By him conducted to the Royal Tent,
To *Saul* he doth *Goliath's* Head present.
Mean while the *Philistins*, their *Champion* dead,
With Terror struck, in great Disorder fled.
The *Hebrews*, shouting, eagerly pursue,
And of them kill'd and wounded not a few.
Thus the proud *Philistins* the Lord did quell,
And wrought Deliv'rance for his *Israel*.

C H A P. III.

A Son had *Saul* whose Name was *Jonathan*,
A brave young Prince, and a courageous Man.
He present was, when *David* to the King
The Trophy of his Victory did bring :
And well observing *David's* Speech and Mein
(The like to which before he'd scarcely seen)
Such Love to *David* touch'd his princely Heart,
It soon produc'd in him an equal Part ;
A noble Friendship hence between them grew,
And which was most affected, neither knew.

A solemn Covenant between them pass'd,
A *Friendship*, that beyond the Grave should last.
The noble Prince did of his Robe divest
Himself, and *David* to accept it press'd.
His Garments he on *David* did bestow ;
Ev'n to his *Sword*, his *Girdle* and his *Bow*.
Which Presents *David* did, with Thanks, accept ;
Pledges of Friendship, to be firmly kept.

In high Esteem, and Favour with the King,
This glorious Victory did *David* bring.
A *Courtier* now the *Shepherd* is become,
The King him not permitting to go Home.
Advanc'd he is unto an high Degree
Of Honour ; none so great with *Saul*, as he.
Over the Men of War the King him set,
Wherein his wise Behaviour did him get
The Love of all the People ; and of all
The *Courtiers* too : *A Thing doth rarely fall*.
Now *Honours* on him wait : and, for a while,
Indulgent Fortune doth upon him smile.
In him both *Court* and *Country* take Delight :
At once the King's and People's Favourite.

But Oh ! how *slippery* are Princes Courts,
Where *fickle Fortune* with poor Mortals sports !
And, by *alluring Bait*s, doth them entice
To trust themselves upon the glazed Ice :
Then, on a suddain, e'er they are aware,
Trips up their Heels, and leaves them growling there.

The

The *Wheel*, whereon she doth her *Creatures* raise,
Is in continual Motion, never stays,
But always *whirls about* : Who sit a Top
To Day, to Morrow to the Bottom drop.

How *ticklish* is a Favourite's Estate,
Who must upon another's *Humour* wait :
And, when he apprehends he stands most fast,
Is puffed down, with an inconstant Blast !
If he the *Prince's Creature* seems to be,
He hardly 'scapes the Peoples *Oblique*,
All their *Mis-baps* to his Account they score,
And lay their *Disappointments* at his Door.
If in the People's Favour he appears,
The Prince then is, or seems to be in Fears ;
And that *too popular* he may not grow,
Seeks all Occasions how to lay him *low*.
So *David* found. The People sing his Praise :
And that, in worthless *Saul* doth Envy raise.

It so fell out that, now the Coasts were clear
From *Philistins*, and People's Minds from *Fear* ;
The *Hebrew Dames*, from all the Cities round,
With Instruments of most melodious Sound,
Came *tripping* out ; and, all along the Way,
Upon the well tun'd Strings, did sweetly play.
Their *Fingers* play'd ; their nimble *Feet* did dance,
For Joy of their much-wish'd Deliverance.

Together thus they come, to meet the King ;
And, in his Ears, this *Epinicion* sing,

[SAUL hath (of Enemies) *his Thousands slain,*
And DAVID his Ten Thousands] with Disdain
The King this heard. It made his Colour rise,
And his *Displeasure* sparkled in his Eyes.

While thus the Women in their tuneful Chöre,
Him faintly praise, and *David* Ten times more,
The Evil Spirit, an envenom'd Dart
Let fly, and lodg'd it in his thoughtful Heart :
The Poison wrought, and in a Trice possess'd,
With *Soul-tormenting Jealousies*, his Breast.
Suspicion, and *Distrust*, in him it bred,
And with *Surmisings* fill'd his troubled Head.
He *swell'd* and *champ't* ; at length his Discontent
Did thus itself, in *angry Accents*, vent.

To *David* they ascribed have, said he,
Ten Thousands : And but *Thousands* unto me.
Thus they prefer my *Vassal* me before :
And, but the Kingdom, what can he have more ?

Hence, *Saul* on *David* kept an evil Eye,
And to have slain him, divers Times, did try :
Ev'n while good *David* on his Harp did play,
Th' Affliction of his Spirit to allay.
But *David's* God (who had King *Saul* rejected,
And chosen *David*) *David* still protected.

When *Saul* perceiv'd (for even wicked Men
Have Sights of God's Outgoings, now and then)
That

That God did prosper *David*, and did move
The Hearts of all the People him to love ;
He daily grew of *David* more afraid,
And studied how he might be best betray'd.

Two Daughters had King *Saul*. A stately Dame
The Elder was, and *MERAB* was her Name.
A topping Lady she, whose *lofty* Look
Shew'd, that she nothing that was *low* could brook.
Commanding Pow'r reign'd in her *sparkling* Eye,
And on her *Brow* sat *awful* Majesty.
A sprightly *Vigour* fill'd her manly Face,
Which yet was not without a *pleasing* Grace.
And had her *Breast* been *bid*, she might have gone
Among the *Warriors*, for an *Amazon*.
So look'd *Penthesilea*, when she came
To *Priam's* Succour. Such another Dame
Was (she who durst engage in single Fight
With *Theseus*) the warlike *Hippolite*.

Unlike herself, a Sister *Merab* had
(The Joy and Grief of many a noble Lad)
Fair *MICHAL* she was call'd, whose lovely Face
No *Feature* wanted that could add a Grace.
Her *Body* delicate. Wherein enshrin'd,
As in its Temple, dwelt a *virtuous* Mind.
Engaging *Sweetness* beamed from her Eye,
And on her *Cheek* sat Maiden Modesty.
Her *courteous* Mein gave Proof to all, that she
From *Pride*, and *Haughtiness* of Mind was free.

For

For of the *Meanest* she would Notice take.
Her whole Converse *Humility* bespake.
So *graceful* was her *Gesture*, it did move,
At once, Beholders to *admire* and *love*.

These were *Saul's* Daughters. And by these the
Ruin on *David* did design to bring. [King
By one of these he hoped to prevail,
If all his other *Stratagems* should fail.
One of these Princesses had promis'd been,
To whose're should kill the *Philistin*.
Which *David* having done, might justly claim
One; but the King had Power which, to name.
He therefore *Merab* first assign'd to be
The Guerdon of young *David's* Victory,
But when the Time approach'd, he chang'd his
And her unto another's Bed consign'd. [Mind,

But *Michal's* lovely *Michal's* Virgin Love,
In strong Desires, did unto *David* move.
This so rejoyc'd her envious Father's Ear,
He said, *I'll give her to him for a Snare*.

His Servants he instructed how to draw
David to yield, to be his Son-in-Law.
They tell him, what Delight in him the King
Did take; what Honour it to him would bring,
To be unto his Sovereign ally'd;
Besides th' Enjoyment of so fair a Bride.

When

When he himself excus'd, upon the Score
 His Family was low : himself too poor ;
 Out of his slender Fortunes to advance
 So large a *Dowry*, as the King, perchance,
 Might look to have (*for Women then were thought,*
It seems, of Worth sufficient to be bought.)
 Th' instructed *Courtiers* presently reply'd,
 The King no *Dowry* doth desire, beside
 An *Hundred Fore-skins* of his Enemies
 The *Philistins* : That *Dowry* will suffice.

This was the Snare the treach'rous King did lay
 His well-deserving *David* to betray.
 Ungrateful Prince ! Though *David* him had freed
 From Danger, when he made *Goliab* bleed :
 Yet on set-purpose he this *Dowry* chose,
 That he to Danger *David* might expose.
 He knew the valiant Youth's advent'rous Mind
 The greatest *Hazards* never had declin'd.
 And, by proposing this, he did intend
David to bring to an untimely End.

'Twas not *Ambition* to be Son-in-Law
 Unto a King, did humble *David* draw.
Michal's fresh Beauty and Affection move
 In youthful *David* like Returns of Love.
 And when he heard what *Dowry* *Saul* propos'd,
 He gladly with the Proposition clos'd.
 The *Maid* he lik'd (as who indeed could choose)
 The *Terms* he lik'd. What was there to refuse ?

For

For though he should not *Michal* thereby gain,
He gladly would the *Philistins* have slain.

Up, with his Men, he in the Morning gets,
And on the *Philistins* so briskly sets ;
That, tho' with all the Speed they could, they fled
He laid, at least, *Two Hundred* of them dead :
Whose *Fore-skins* he unto the Court did bring,
And gave a *double* Dowry to the King.

Ill-pleas'd was *Saul*, that what he did project
For *David's* Ruin, wrought not that Effect.
Had *David's* Head been lifeless brought, that Sight
Would to his Eyes have yielded more Delight.
Yet, since it would not further his Design,
To manifest Displeasure, and repine ;
He held it best, his Promise good to make ;
And *David* for his Son-in-Law to take.
Concealing therefore, for a little while,
His *Hatred* under a dissembled *Smile* ;
He of *true* Gladness made a *feigned* Show,
And *Michal* upon *David* did bestow.
The Marriage-Rites perform'd, the Shepherd's led,
With Nuptial Songs, to Princess *Michal's* Bed.
Where leaving them, in amorous Embraces,
My Muse their Father's *Machinations* traces.

C H A P. IV.

N O T fully were the Princely *Nuptials* o'er ;
Not fully Bride and Bridegroom joy'd, before
Invidious Fame, by a confirm'd Report,
Disturb'd the Pleasures of the peaceful Court.

The *Philistins*, again, had took the Field :
The *Viol* now must to the *Clarion* yield.
David to Field most go : the Trumpet sounds,
To bid the *Philistins* prepare for Wounds.
Saul's Hope revives, that some *Philistian* Spear
Will rid him both of *David* and his Fear :
To lose a Battle would not trouble *Saul*,
So he might lose his Son-in-Law withal.
But, to his Trouble, *David* from the War
Return'd, *with Conquest*, and *without a Scar*.
And, to torment him more, each Enterprize
Rais'd *David* higher in the Peoples Eyes.

'Till now, a secret Hope restrained *Saul*,
That *David* by the *Philistins* would fall ;
But having, by repeated Trials, found
That *David* still return'd, without a Wound :
Grown desperate, and impatient of Delay,
He bids his Son, and Servants, *David* slay.

Surpriz'd,

Surpriz'd, the *Courtiers* on each other gaze,
As Men whom suddain Horror doth amaze.
None undertakes the Work: all silent stand,
Fill'd with *Abhorrence* of the King's Command.
They could not, without much Reluctance, hear
His Death decreed, who was to them so dear.
Nor could the King a Man amongst them gain,
That would with *David's* Blood, a *Finger* stain.

But *Jonathan*, whose deeper rooted Love
Did, with a *stronger Spring*, to *David* move,
Was not content, barely to hold his Hand,
From executing that unjust Command:
Unless his utmost Pow'r he also bent,
His Brother *David's* Ruin to prevent.

Leaving his Father therefore, out he goes,
His Father's wicked Counsels to disclose
To *David*. But when unto him he came,
Ah! How *confus'd* he was, 'twixt *Grief* and *Shame*.
He *griev'd* to find his Friend so near Death's Jaws,
And *blush'd* to think his Father was the Cause.
Shame made him loth his Father's Fault to speak,
But Friendship prompted, the Design to break.
Friendship prevail'd. And with a down-cast Eye,
He made him understand the Danger nigh.

Not more was *David* troubled, when he heard
What he before suspected not, nor fear'd:
Than over-joy'd in *Jonathan* to find
So true a Friendship, and so brave a Mind.

And

And, in the most endearing Terms, he shew'd
His hearty Sense thereof and Gratitude.

Then, sitting down together, they concert
How they may best th' impending Storm avert.
It was agreed, that *David* should abide
In secret, until *Jonathan* had try'd
His Father's Temper ; that he so might find,
How deep th' Offence was rooted in his Mind.

They part. And *David* doth himself with-draw,
To Court goes *Jonathan*. With filial Awe,
And humble Stile, he *David's* Cause doth plead ;
And with his Father, thus, doth intercede.

‘ Let not the King against his Servant sin,
‘ Whose Worksto thee-wards ever good have been.
‘ His Life, thou know’st, he in his Hand did put ;
‘ And great *Goliab's* Head he off did cut.
‘ The monstrous *Philistin* by *David* fell.
‘ A great Salvation, to all *Israel*,
‘ The Lord by him did work. Thou didst it see ;
‘ And did’st therein rejoice, as well as we.
‘ Why wilt thou *David* flout, without a Cause,
‘ Who is in all Things subject to thy Laws ?
‘ O draw not on thy self the heavy Guilt,
‘ That waits on *guiltless* Blood unjustly spilt !
‘ Pardon, most honour’d Father, I beseech,
‘ My Boldness, and the Freedom of my Speech.
‘ It is for *David* that I humbly sue,
‘ *David*, who doth thine Enemies subdue.

Let

‘ Let me prevail: thine Anger pray withdraw
 ‘ From both *my Brother*, and *thy Son-in-Law*.’

So well did *Jonathan* discharge his Part,
 So well he us’d the *Oratorian* Art;
 That he prevail’d: The King revers’d his Doom:
The Father by the Son was overcome.
 And that there might no Ground for Fear remain,
He gave his Oath, David should not be slain.
 On which Assurance *Jonathan* did bring
David, to wait again upon the King.
 His Place in Court he takes: and for a Space,
 He stands, as formerly, in *seeming* Grace.

But ’twas not long before the cursed Root
 Of *Envy*, did again begin to shoot:
 And jealous *Saul* a fresh Occasion took,
 On *David* with an evil Eye to look.
 The restless *Philistins* the Land again
 Invaded had. Whom *David* to restrain
 His Men led forth; and with such Fury flew
 Upon them, that he their main Body flew.
 Great was the Slaughter his revengeful Blade
 Upon the *Philistins*, at that Time, made:
 That had not some secur’d themselves by Flight,
 The Host of *Philistins* had perish’d quite.

So great a Victory, ’twas thought by all,
 Would have endeared *David* unto *Saul*:
 And ’twas but reasonable to expect,
 So good a Cause should yield a good Effect.

But,

But, on the other Hand, he *David* more
 Maligned now, than e'er he did before.
 He saw, that *David* daily more became
 The People's Darling: and he thought his Aim
 Was at the Crown. He let in a *Surmise*,
 That *David*, one Day, would against him rise.
 He recollected what the *Prophet* said
 Of his *Rejection*. And he was afraid,
David would prove that *Neighbour*, * unto whom
 The Kingdom, rent from him, in Time should come.
 He saw, that God did eminently bless
 All *David's* Undertakings with Success.
 That *David* was unto the People dear,
 He also saw; and that encreas'd his *Fear*.
 He thought withal, that *David* did improve,
 By all the Arts he could, the Peoples Love;
 That, having gain'd a pow'rful Interest,
 He might, by Force, the *Scepter* from him wrest.
 These restless Workings of his troubl'd Head,
 Perplexing Thoughts, and Terrors in him bred.
 At length he was with Apprehensions fill'd,
 That He himself, by *David*, should be kill'd.

How miserable is the State of those,
 Whom blind *Suspicion* doth to *Fear* expose!
 Death hath less Terror in it. *Who can find*
A Torment equal to a jealous Mind!

When *Saul* this Apprehension in had let,
 His Passions all were in a Ferment set;

C

He

* 1 Sam. xv. 28.

Fear, Anger, Envy, Madness, vengeful Hate
 Did boil together, and incorporate
 In his foul Breast: yet so, that bloodless *Fear*
 Did, in his Face prædominant appear.
 Those other *Passions* ready were t' invent
 New Kinds of *Tortures*, *David* to torment:
 But *Fear* o'er-rul'd, insinuating he,
 By *David's* Death, himself from Death might free.
 And that it must be by a suddain Stroke,
 Lest *David* should the Peoples Help invoke,
 And they by Force him rescue. Thus again
 Is guiltless *David* destin'd to be slain,
 By secret Sentence in the King's own Heart,
 Which he resolv'd he would to none impart.
 For he no more would trust to Friend, or Foe:
 But his own Hand should give the fatal Blow.

C H A P. V.

WHen thus the *King* had *David's* Death design'd,
 The faithful Chief, whose uncorrupted Mind
 Was never tainted with disloyal Stain,
 Return'd from Battle to the Court again.
 And, as a Proof of Victory, did bring,
 Of Spoils, a chosen Present to the King.

How easily is *Innocence* betray'd,
 When, under *Shews* of Kindness, *Snares* are laid!
 No Apprehension had the guiltless Youth
 Of Danger; arm'd with *Probity* and *Truth*

He

He such an *inoffensive* Mind did bear,
As kept him free from all suspicious Fear:
With Confidence unto the King he goes,
(*For Confidence from Innocency flows*)
And doth, in order, unto him relate
The Battle, and his Army's present State.

The crafty King too, at the first Congress
No Token of Displeasure did express.
But, under *outside* Kindness, *inward* Hate
Concealing, did a fitter Season wait
To execute his Purpose; that the Blow
Might be secure, which should his Anger show.

Nor did he long for an Occasion wait,
But, in a while, as in his House he sate;
The evil Spirit from the Lord (*for God
Makes use of evil Spirits, as a Rod*)
Upon him came; his Jav'lin in his Hand,
And *David*, playing on his Harp, did stand
Before him, with refreshing Tunes t' allay
His Grief, and th' evil Spirit drive away.

So kind an Office, sure, one might have thought,
Upon the worst of Natures would have wrought:
And hindred even the most savage Mind,
From perpetrating what he had design'd.
But *Saul*, now hard'ned to a brutish Rage,
Beyond the Force of Harmony t' assuage,
Thinking he now had sure Advantage got
To strike the Stroke, when *David* ey'd him not,

His Jav'lin at him, with such Fury, cast,
That, had it hit, that Hour had been his last.
But who the Kingdom unto *David* gave,
Did *David* now from threat'ned Danger save.

The *rufs'ling* of *Saul's* Garment (when on high
He rais'd his Arm, to let the Jav'lin fly)
Made *David* look, and nimbly slip aside,
While the *sharp-pointed Shaft* did by him glide.
Which, *whirling* by, with such a Force did fall,
That fast it stuck upon the adverse Wall.

'Twas Time for *David* Warning now to take,
And for his Safety due Provision make.
His *Person* now he could no longer trust,
With one, that neither *grateful* was, nor just.
One, whom no Services could render kind :
Nor the most solemn Promises could bind.
One, who, to gratify his groundless Hate,
Stuck not his sacred Oath to violate.
With such an One it was not safe to stay :
While therefore safe he was, he went away.
The treach'rous Court he speedily forsook,
And to his private House himself betook :
His faithful Wife acquainting with the Case,
Her Father's Falshood, and his own Disgrace.

Mean while, the wrathful King (whose hot Desire
of *David's* Death, had set him all on Fire)
Vex'd that his *rufs'ling* Robe that Warning gave
To *David*, from the Stroke himself to save ;

And

And fearing lest, if now he got away,
He might the Wrong revenge another Day :
All in a Rage, he certain of his Guard
(Whose *furly* Looks bespake their Natures *hard*)
Unto him call'd ; and charg'd them to repair
Forthwith to *David's* House, and slay him there.

With down-cast Looks the troubled Guards
 receive
The unexpected Charge. The Court they leave ;
And lest they should, for Backwardness be check'd ;
To *David's* House their heavy Steps direct.
There make a Stand, and set a private Watch,
That *David*, stepping out, they might dispatch.

But loyal *Michal*, whose mistrustful Eye
Had all the Ways survey'd, did them descry :
And told her Husband, if he should remain
In's House 'till Morning, he would then be slain.
Then, through a Lattice, did direct his Eye
To th' Place where the insidious Guards did lye.

The Sight of these, and Sense for what they came,
Did his advent'rous Courage so enflame :
That, had not *Michal*, weeping, on him hung,
He boldly had himself among them flung,
With Sword in Hand. But *Michal's* moving Tears
Wrought him to listen to her pressing Fears.
Together, thereupon, they Counsel take ;
What Means are best, his safe Escape to make :

Love shews the Way: fair *Michal* doth propose;
And *David*, won by her, doth therewith close.

When *Darkness* had the Place of *Light* possess'd,
And drowzy Sleep had Mortals laid to rest;
When through the fable Clouds no Star appear'd,
No warlike Sound, no busie Noise was heard,
Then *Michal* (who had all Things ready got,
Needful to carry on the harmless Plot)
Having her dearest *David* oft embrac'd
(While he encircled, with his Arms, her Waist)
Did, through a Window, gently let him down;
And softly said, *Live David, for the Crown.*
May God thee keep, and bring thee safe again
Unto thy *Michal*. He reply'd, A M E N.
Then, with a Sigh, she did the Window close,
Her Sigh he eccho'd: and away he goes.

C H A P. VI.

NOW travels *David*, in a mournful Plight,
Beneath the Covert of a darksome Night;
And *Gibea* left, himself he recommends
To God's Protection, and to *Ramah* bends
His wand'ring Course. At *Ramah* then did dwell
His cordial Friend, the Prophet *Samuel*.
Arriv'd, he to the Prophet opens all
The Wrongs, which he sustained had from *Saul*.
How he his Life had fought, he doth relate;
And much laments his own unhappy State.

The

The good old Man doth *David's* Cause bewail,
And, that his Spirit might not sink, or fail ;
Doth him encourage in the Lord to trust,
Whom he had found both merciful and just.
He wish'd him call to Mind the *Oil* was shed,
At *Bethlehem*, upon his youthful Head;
By God's Command : that, being so anointed,
He to the Kingdom was, by God appointed ;
Who, through his Troubles, would him still preserve
From Hurt, if he from God did never swerve.
Advis'd him therefore, not to let in *Fear*,
How great foe'er his *Perils* might appear :
But trust in God, who never will forsake
The *Wrong'd* ; who him for their *Protector* take.
David thus strength'ned : he and *Samuel*
To *Najoth* go ; and there together dwell.

Mean while, with eager Eyes, th' impatient King,
Look'd, every Moment, when his Guards would
bring
The Head of *David*. In, at length, they come,
And tell him, *David's sick a Bed at Home*.
For, with that shift, when they the Door drew nigh,
And ask'd for *David*, *Michal* put them by ;
Having an *Image* placed in his Bed,
With *Goats-hair* Pillow laid, as 'twere his Head.

With furrow'd Brows, and Countenance severe,
The disappointed King his Guards did hear ;
With sharp Reproaches blam'd their Negligence,
And sent them back, with speed, to bring him thence.

Go, fetch him, Bed and all, without Delay,
Said he, that I myself the Wretch may slay.

They go. But Oh! the Rage that in him burn'd,
And at his Nostrils fum'd, when they return'd,
And brought him Word that, *David* being fled,
They found an *Image* only in his Bed.
How did he rage and storm! incens'd the more
At this Escape, than e'er he was before.
Inflam'd to think, that by a Woman's Wile,
His Daughter *Michal* should him thus beguile.
His Passion heighten'd, that his Troops should let
His hated Son have Time away to get.
But that which most of all disturb'd his Mind,
Was, that he *David* knew not where to find.
And foul he would have fell, it might be fear'd,
Upon his Guards, had he not timely heard,
That *David*, in the dark, to *Najoth* slid;
And there himself among the Prophets hid.

Forthwith to *Najoth* Messengers he sent,
To fetch him thence: away, with speed, they went.
But here, the Lord himself doth interpose,
To save his *David* from approaching Foes:
For when they to the *Prophets School* were come,
And saw the Company of Prophets: some
Then prophesying, all the rest attent,
And *Sam'el* standing o'er, as President,
They could not *David* touch: But on them all
Who were, to apprehend him, sent by *Saul*,
A Spirit came from God; and they began
To prophesy, in order, Man for Man.

Thrice did the stubborn King this Course repeat,
And *thrice* did God his base Intent defeat.
No sooner came his Messengers among
The Prophets, but prophetick Notes they sung.
Gall'd with these Disappointments, th'angry King
(Whom *Envy*, *Fear*, and *Jealousie* did sting)
Resolves in Person he'll to *Najoth* go ;
And once more try what he himself can do :
Forward he sets, and subt'lly as he went,
Contriv'd how he might *David* circumvent.
But e're he got to *Najoth*, on him fell
A Spirit from the Lord ; and he, as well
As they whom he before had sent, began
To prophecy, and prophesying ran
To *Najoth*, where, at sight of *Samuel*,
First stripping off his Cloaths, he prostrate fell
Upon the Ground ; and in that rueful Plight,
Lay naked all that Day, and all that Night.
Whence a proverbial Speech it grew to be,
When in religious Company we see,
An impious Man affect a Saintly Shew,
Is Saul among the pious Prophets too !

How admirable are the Ways of God,
Whether his *Staff* he uses, or his *Rod* !
The *first* of these his fainting Ones doth stay :
The *last* doth them correct that run astray.
Who would not that resistless Being fear,
Who eas'ly thus can, in a Moment, veer
Our fixt Intent ? Who would not to that Hand
His Will submit, that can all Wills command ?

How

How *resolutely*, in an headstrong Will,
Did *Saul* determine he would *David* kill!
How eagerly did he his Will pursue,
His trembling Hands in *David's* Blood t^o imbrue!
What direful Threatnings did he vent, what he
Would do, could he again but *David* see!
Yet, when he came where *David* was, we find
That awful Pow'r his Spirit strait did bind:
He could not *David* touch. No Pow'r he had,
How bad so'er his Will was, to be bad.
But over-pow'r'd (though evil was his Heart)
He was constrain'd to act the Prophet's Part.
He spake, and did, as Prophets us'd to do,
Who were inspired by the Lord thereto.

Small odds, perhaps, or none to outward Sight,
Distinguish'd this *wrong* Prophet from the *right*.
Each, probably, alike might act, and speak,
And be alike regarded, by the *Weak*.
The undiscerning Crowd, who seldom try
Beyond the *outward Ear*, and *outward Eye*.
Yet plain it is, that *Saul* was now no more
By God regarded, than he was before.
He prophesied, when he was among
The Prophets; but his Spirit still was *wrong*.

One long before (who *Balak* taught to lay
A dang'rous Stumbling Block in *Israel's* Way)
A grand Exemplar is, that wicked Men,
Against their Wills, may utter, now and then,
Those

Those sacred Myſteries, which God alone
Doth, by his Spirit, unto Man make known.

What glorious Things did *Beor's* Son *declare
Concerning *Jacob's* Seed! How precious are
The *Propheſies*, wherein he did foretel
The *Beauty, Strength, and State of Iſrael*!
What *Soul refreshing* Comforts do ariſe,
In pious Minds, from thoſe ſweet *Propheſies*!
And well they may; for God himſelf had put
Into the Prophet's Mouth a *Word*, and ſhut
His *Divinations* out; whereby we know,
His Speech did from the holy Spirit flow.

Yet this, perhaps, of Prophets was the worſt,
Who, for *Advantage*, would have *Iſr'el* curs'd.
For which, how well ſoe'er he ſpake, he ſtands
Condemn'd upon Record, with publick Brands.
Yet God, to ſhew his Sov'reignty, doth chuſe,
Sometimes, the Tongues of ſuch as theſe to uſe.
Who, tho' the Truths they tell may be believ'd;
Yet are not they themſelves to be receiv'd.
Though *Balaam* did of *Jacob's* † Star declare,
The Sword of Iſr'el did not Balaam || ſpare:
Nor is it long e're prophesying *Saul*
Will be oblig'd upon his Sword to ** fall.

May

* *Numb.* xxiii, and xxiv.
|| *Numb.* xxxi. 8.

† *Numb.* xxiv. 17.
** *1 Sam.* xxi. 4.

May these Examples lead us to beware
 How we receive such (preach they n'er so fair)
 For Gospel Ministers. But let us rather
 Observe (as he * of old) But who's their Father?
 For Men may glorious Truths declare, we see,
 Yet they the Children of the Devil be.

C H A P. VII.

WHILE *Saul* among the Seers enraptur'd lay,
 Depriv'd of Pow'r to move a Foot away;
 Good *David*, who, with Rev'rence, much admir'd
 This gracious Act of Providence, retir'd;
 Left, when the *Fit was over*, angry *Saul*
 Should, in Displeasure, on the *Prophets* fall.

From *Najoth* therefore (having first advis'd
 With rev'rend *Sam'el*, whom he highly priz'd)
 He, undiscern'd, withdrew; and strait did bend
 His Course to *Jonathan*, his faithful Friend:
 Into whose Bosom he could freely vent
 His Sorrows, and his hapless State lament.

What Sin of mine has rais'd this cruel Strife,
 That I, said he, am hunted for my Life?

The gentle Prince (whose truly noble Breast
 Was with a generous Compassion blest)

His

* 1 Sam. x. 22.

His Friend's Complaint, his Dangers and his Fears,
With *close*, but *sorrowful*, Attention hears :
And quick returns this short, but kind Reply,
Almighty God forbid ! *Thou shalt not die* :
And straight endeavours, whatsoe'er he may,
His Fears, with strong Assurance, to allay.
He thought his Father nothing would essay,
Without consulting him about the Way ;
And thereby hop'd it in his Pow'r would be,
In case of an Attack, his Friend to free.

But *David*, whom Experience now had taught,
That, both by *Force* and *Fraud*, his Life was sought.
Judg'd it not safe, his Person to expose,
On such uncertain, ticklish Grounds as those :
He told his *Jonathan*, 'Twas not unknown,
How firm a Friendship was between them grown.
'Twas therefore reasonable to believe,
His Father hid from him what would him grieve :
Or might, perhaps, designedly conceal
His Mind from him, lest he should it reveal.
Yet know, said he, as sure as thou hast Breath,
There's but a single Step 'twixt me and Death.

That Word with such an Accent, *David* spake ;
Impressions deep it could not fail to make
Upon his tender Friend. His quick'ned Sense
Like a strong Spring, new Vigour took from thence.
Starting, he said, From Evil may'st thou be,
My dearest *David*, and from Danger, free !

Which

Which that thou may'st, I'm ready here to do,
Whate'ere thou judgest may conduce thereto.

Then sitting down, they mutual Counsel take,
And this Conclusion, prudently they make,
That *Jonathan*, his Father's Mind, once more,
At his Return from *Najoth*, should explore:
And should, accordingly, let *David* know,
If *Saul* his Death designed yet, or no.
David, mean while, did, by Agreement, stay
At *Ezel-stone* (a Mark, that shew'd the Way)
Near which, in bushy Covert, he might lye
Safe, from the View of any passing by.

And now, before their parting Leave they took,
A sacred Covenant afresh they strook,
A 'during Tye, confirm'd by solemn Oath,
A Bond inviolable on them both,
Which to their latest Offspring should extend,
On either Side, and never have an End:
By which *As stipulation* they did bind
Themselves, to be unto each other kind.
That *Jonathan* should faithfully report
To *David*, how he found Affairs at Court:
And should his utmost Pow'r imploy, to free
His Friend from Danger, if he any see.
On t'other Hand, That *David* (when the Throne
Of *Israel* should come to be his own)
Should *Jonathan*, and all that from him spring,
Secure from Danger, while himself is King.

For

For *Jonathan* (whose deeply-piercing Eye
On *David's* Brow did Marks of Empire spy)
Was wont, with Confidence, his Friend to tell,
That he should be the King of *Israel*.

By this Time *Saul* from *Najoth* was return'd,
With smother Brow. But in his Breast still burn'd
Malignant Hate: Nor did he yet despair,
To compass *David's* Death at unaware.

The *New-Moon* now approach'd, and therewithal
Reviv'd the wicked Hopes of cruel *Saul*.
He made no doubt but at the sacred Feast,
He should have zealous *David* for his Guest.
For then it pleas'd him always to admit
David at Table with himself to sit.
And then, might hope, with more Success to cast
His fatal Spear, than when he threw it last.

The *New-Moon* being come, and *David's* Seat
Left empty when the King sat down to Meat,
Two Days together; *Saul* began to doubt
It was design'd: And with an angry Pout,
Why cometh not, said he, old *Jesse's* Son
To Meat, as he, in former Times, hath done?

Thus *Saul* to *Jonathan*: Who, having ey'd
His Father's angry Countenance, reply'd,
Since thou art pleas'd the Reason to demand
Of *David's* Absence, please to understand,

That

That *David* unto *Beth-lehem* is gone,
 On urgent Bus'ness (to return anon)
 A Yearly Sacrifice his Brethren hold,
 At this Time there, (as he himself me told)
 To which the Family do all repair ;
 And *David* too was summon'd to be there.
 He therefore earnestly of me did crave
 My Leave to go, which readily I gave.

As from the Prince's Lips these Words did fall,
 A Fire of Rage enkindl'd was in *Saul*
 Against his Son, which forth, in Choler, brake :
 And with a furious Accent, thus he spake.

‘ Thou Son of the perverse rebellious Woman
 ‘ (Whose headstrong Folly will berul'd by no Man)
 ‘ Too well I know, that *Jesse's* Son and thee,
 ‘ To thy Confusion, but too well agree ;
 ‘ Yet thou, 'till he's securely in his Grave,
 ‘ No Kingdom, no Establishment can have.
 ‘ Send therefore, fetch him (e'er he further fly)
 ‘ Make no delay, *for he shall surely die.*'
 These Words in such a *thund'ring Tone* he spake,
 As seem'd to make the Hall he sat in shake.

Griev'd was the Princely *Jonatban*, to hear
 A Sentence so unjust, and so severe.
 Small Hopes he had ; yet could not choose, but try,
 His Father's stormy Mind to pacify.
 And to that Purpose, in an humble Tone,
 Ask'd, *Why shall David die ? what hath he done ?*

As

As suppl'ing Oyl, on flaming Fire cast,
Instead of *quenching*, doth *augment* the Blast.
So *Jonathan's* soft Words enkindled more
His wrathful Father, than he was before.
He nothing said : Too full he was to speak,
His *stifling* Choler could not Silence break :
But snatching up, with furious Haste, his Spear,
(Which at his Hand, *designedly* stood near)
With such a Force, at *Jonathan* he threw,
As, more than Words, his bloody Mind did shew.

Altho' the Prince the Stroak did nimbly shun ;
Yet was he greatly mov'd, at what was done.
Such gross *Indignity* would stir a Man
Of meaner Spirits than was *Jonathan* ;
Consid'ring that it was a *publick* Shame :
And *more*, because it from a Father came.
The harder too it was for him to bear,
Who was his Father's, and the Kingdom's *Heir* ;
Himself long since adult : and, which was more,
Had been his Father's *Vice-Roy* just before.
All which together working in his Breast,
Made this Abuse uneasy to digest.

From Table therefore he, in Heat, arose ;
And, breathing forth Displeasure, out he goes.
Then to his own *Apartment* doth retire,
To give free Vent to this new kindled Fire ;
Where falling on his Couch, he doth bemoan
Much more his Friend's Condition, than his own.

D

Respecting

Respecting what concern'd his late Disgrace,
He doubted not, confid'ring Men would place
All to his Father's *Passion* ; and that he
Himself, his *Passion o'er*, would troubled be.
But, ah ! his Friend, his Friend ! poor *David's* Case
Did more affect him, than his own Disgrace.
No longer now doth any Thought remain
In *Jonathan*, that *David's* Fears were vain.
No clearer Evidence he now doth need,
That *David's* Death was by the King decreed.
This Act of Violence, for *David's* Sake,
Both clear'd his Doubt, and made his Heart to ake.

The tedious Night in restless Tossings spent,
Betwixt uneasie *Grief* and *Discontent* ;
As soon as e'er *Aurora* did disclose
The springing Day, the faithful Prince arose :
Both *Honour* and *Affection* did him spur ;
And, e'er the *Lark* was stirring, made him stir.
Honour reminds him, that his Word he gave
To *David* : Love said, Thou must *David* save.
Which that he might, he to the Field doth go,
(His *Page* his Quiver bearing, and his Bow ;
Not knowing why :) No otherwise he went,
Than if, to recreate himself, he meant.

When near the place, where *Jesse's* Son did wait
The doubtful Issue of his *doleful* Fate,
His curved Bow, with sinew'd Arm, he drew ;
And over *David's* Head the Arrows flew :

One

One flying Shaft a private Token bore,
Agreed upon between themselves before ;
By which poor *David* understood too well,
What *Jonathan* unwilling was to tell.

The thoughtless *Page*, who nothing did suspect,
With nimble Speed the Arrows did collect ;
And to his Master bring, who did deliver
Unto the *Lad* his unstrung Bow and Quiver
To carry home: Himself remain'd behind,
As if to walk alone he were inclin'd.

The Youth now gone, and *Jonathan* alone,
Strait *David* issu'd forth, by *Ezel-stone* ;
And, falling to the Ground ; with triple Bend
Of Body, did salute his noble Friend.
Then casting Arms about each other's Neck,
Their pearly Tears each other's Breast bedeck.
They *wept* and *kiss'd*, they *kiss'd* and *wept* again,
Nor could they soon those *christol Floods* restrain.
Each *Kiss* a fresh Supply of Tears did breed,
In both their Eyes ; till *David* did exceed.
At length, their Covenant renew'd, they part,
Each kindly bearing back the other's Heart.
They part : And each doth his own Path pursue,
With Eyes reflex while either was in View.

The End of the FIRST BOOK.

DAVIDEIS.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

NOW travels *David* with a thoughtful Mind,
 Uncertain where a safe *Retreat* to find :
 For though, while prosp'rous his Affairs did stand,
 He Friends, and Servants *many*, could command,
 Yet now, that Frown had wrinkled Fortune's Face,
 He knew not where to find a resting Place.

In this perplexed State, his pious Mind
 Was, to consult the *Oracle*, inclin'd ;
 The *inambiguous* Oracle, from whence
Jehovah secret Counsels did dispense :
 And *undecieving* Answers always gave
 To such as, with an honest Mind, did crave.

To *Nob* his weary Steps he therefore bends,
 (*Nob* was a City of the Priests, his Friends)
 And to *Abimelech* he doth repair,
 Who then possess'd the *Pontifical* Chair.

The

The rev'rend *Pontiff*, who was unadvis'd
Of *David's* Troubles, now was much surpris'd
To see him come alone; who, not long since,
Was royally attended, like a Prince.
He startled at the Sight: nor could forbear
To ask, why *unattended* he came there.

It hap'ned, that a certain *Edomite*,
Who to the *Hebrews* was a *Profelyte*,
(One who had Charge and Oversight of all
The *Herd*s, and *Herd-men*, that belong'd to *Saul*)
Was with the Priest: but what his Business there,
Doth not to us by sacred Writ appear;
'Tis only left, in brief, upon Record,
That he was there detain'd before the Lord.
Him, standing in a Corner, *David* spy'd,
Before he to *Abimelech* reply'd;
And, knowing well the Man, he was afraid
His Friend, the Priest, would be by him betray'd,
If, after he the King's Displeasure knew,
He any Kindness unto him should shew.
Lest therefore *into Danger* he should bring
His Friend, or *out of Favour* with the King;
He held it best his Troubles to conceal,
And not his adverse Fortune to reveal:
That, if this *Pick-thank* should relate to *Saul*
Ought that, against the Priest should stir his Gaul.
The Priest the Accusation might surmount,
And place his Kindness to the King's Account.

He therefore gave the *Priest* to understand,
His coming thus, was by the *King's* Command :
Who, he pretended had dispatch'd him so,
That none his secret Enterprize might know :
And that his Servants he before did send
To such a Place, his coming to attend.
Adding, that in such haste he came away
(The *King's* Command admitting no Delay)
That of Provision he had never thought ;
Nor had his Sword, or Weapons with him brought.

The guiltless *Priest*, with unsuspecting Ear,
This feigned Story, for a Truth did hear.
And, not with *Viſuals* only him supply'd,
But arm'd him with *Goliab's* Sword beside :
Which, offer'd to the Lord, when he was slain,
Did with the *Priest* unto that Time remain.
Nay, wanting other, he the *Shew-Bread* gave,
Appointed for the *Priests* alone to have.
In doing which, he errs that thinks he err'd :
Since *Mercy* is to *Sacrifice* preferr'd.
Yet e'er he gave the consecrated Bread,
He ask'd, if they, who should therewith be fed,
Were clean. *Who will of holy Things partake,
Must whatsoever makes unclean forsake.*

Thus furnish'd, *David* did from *Nob* depart,
And turn'd his Face to *Gath*, with heavy Heart ;
Not knowing else, where he his Head might hide :
Nor could he long in Safety there abide.

The Servants of King *Achish* quickly knew
That he was *David*, who *Goliath* slew.
And strait recounted (to incense their King)
What e'rst the *Hebrew* Dames of him did sing,
When, in their Dancing and triumphant Strain,
They chanted, he had his *Ten Thousands* slain.
This *David* heard : but would not seem to hear,
Concealing, with his utmost Care, his Fear ;
'Till, by a *Statagem*, he found a Way
Himself from *Gath* in Safety to convey.

When past the Bounds of the *Philistine's* Land,
On *Isr'el's* Coast again ; he's at a Stand
Which Way to take, or whither to direct
His wandring Feet : where he might, unsuspect,
Absconded lie, until those Clouds were past,
With which his *Hemisphere* was overcast.
In all his Tract, unknowing of a Friend
Whom he could trust : and who could him defend,
And *Saul*, if once discover'd, would (he knew)
Through all the Tribes of *Israel* him pursue.

But little Time could he deliberate,
What Course to take, so pressing was his Fate ;
Yet, in those Moments, many a Place was brought
Under the Judgment of his winged Thought.

Of all the *Refuges* his wary Mind
Could, in such haste, and on a suddain, find,
None pleas'd him better, than a certain Cave,
To which its Name the Town *Adullam* gave.

A spacious Cave it was, yet known to few :
Remote from *Gibeath*, and from publick View.
And (which did recommend it to his State)
'Twas in the Tribe of *Judab* situate ;
Judab, the Tribe from which he sprang, and whence
He had most Reason to expect Defence.
This solitary Cave, he thought, was best :
Where, for a while, he hop'd to find some Rest.
The Towns and Cities therefore he forsook,
And to *Adullum's* Cave himself betook.
Where long he had not been, before he spy'd
A Friend pass by, whose Faith he oft had try'd :
By whom, unto his Brethren, and his Friends,
He notice of his safe Arrival sends.

With Joy, like that which *Jacob* did revive,
When News was brought that *Joseph* was alive,
Did good old *Jesse* the good Tidings hear
That *David* was in Safety and so near :
And quickly he, his Wife, and ev'ry Son,
With all their Families, to *David* run,
Him to Embrace, and cheer him in his Straight :
Henceforth resolv'd to share a common Fate.

This Fame expanded with a loud Report ;
And Strangers too, in Multitudes, resort.
Whoe'er was in *Distress*, or *Discontent* ;
And all that were in *Debt*, unto him went.
A num'rous Company to him repair,
With *Minds* as desp'rate, as their *Fortunes* were.

And

And these, with one Consent, implore that he
A *Captain* o'er them will vouchsafe to be.
He to their Importunity doth yield,
And taking *Must* of them in the Field ;
Who t' other Day, no living Soul could find,
With whom to trust his Person, or his Mind :
Now finds himself environ'd with a Throng
Of mett'led Blades, about *Four-hundred strong*.

When first that *lonely Cave* was in his Eye,
He purpos'd only there *obscur'd* to lye,
'Till *Providence* should his Affairs dispose :
And reconcile him to his causeless Foes.
But this *Access* of Forces did him force
To alter now his Counsels, and his Course.
He well consider'd, that it was in vain
To hope that he could long *conceal'd* remain.
That of this Confluence of Men, Report
Would soon be made to *Saul's* enquiring Court.
And that with windy Trumpet, flying Fame
The Case would quickly thro' the Tribes proclaim;
That *Saul*, appriz'd, would not a Moment stay,
But fly upon him, like a Bird of Prey.
He therefore all things needful doth, with Care,
In readiness for his *Defence* prepare.
His Soldiers he doth *discipline*, and show
Both how to use the *Sword*, and draw the *Bow*.
His aged Parents unto *Moab's* King
(Safe-Conduct first obtained) he doth bring ;
On Promise, that they there should safe abide,
'Till God should please the Quarrel to decide :

For

For *Moab's* King and *Saul* were then at War;
Which made him *David* countenance so far.

Things thus dispos'd, he from the Hold did go
(God, by his Prophet *Gad*, directing so)
And march'd to *Hareth-Forest*, where he might,
If forc'd thereto, with more Advantage Fight.

C H A P. II.

NOW wrap thy self, my *Muse*, in sable Weed,
While thou relates a most inhuman Deed
As e'er was done. Lay by thy *Lawrels* now,
And wreath thy Temples with a *Cypress-Bough*.
Thou, who, of all the *Nine*, ne'er known to smile,
Art held *Inventress* of the *Tragick* Stile,
Speak through my Quill, and on a doleful String,
In mournful Notes, a *Tragick* Story sing.

It was not long, e'er *Saul's* attentive Ear,
Of *David*, and his new-raisd Men, did hear.
And calling to Remembrance, that his Son
(Whose Courage was inferior to none)
On the *Affront* was put upon him last
(When he, at Meat, his Jav'lin at him cast)
Was, in Displeasure, from the Court retir'd:
His Fear suggested that they both *conspir'd*
Against him, and confederated were,
His Crown and Scepter 'twixt themselves to share;
Which,

Which, well he knew, could not be done, but he
Must, if not slain, at least *dethroned* be.

The Thought of which, as it did *Horror* breed
In him, whose *Fear* did from his *Guilt* proceed.
So did it blow his *Anger* to a *Rage*,
Beyond the Force of *Reason* to assuage.

In this *Turmoil*, he chanc'd abroad to be,
Beneath the Umbrage of a spreading Tree ;
Under whose shady Boughs, in *Chair of State*,
He fate, himself to cool and recreate.
About him stood his Servants, in a Ring,
Waiting the Pleasure of their angry King.

As *chafing* thus he fate, 'twixt *Wrath* and *Fear*,
Vibrating, in his palsied Hands, his Spear ;
His Terror-striking Eye he roll'd about :
And, in a while, his *Choler* thus brake out.

‘ Hear now, ye *Benjamites*, will *Jesse's* Son,
‘ When he the Crown of *Israel* hath won,
‘ To ev'ry one of you (who Succour yields
‘ Unto him now) rich *Vineyards* give and *Fields* ?
‘ Will he you all, of Thousands, *Captains* make ?
‘ That ye so ready are his Part to take ;
‘ That all of you against me have *conspir'd* :
‘ And not a Man, since *Jonathan* retir'd,
‘ Hath shew'd me that my Son a League hath made
‘ With *Jesse's* Son : and that I am betray'd ?
‘ Are ye so well assur'd of *David's* Grace,
‘ That he will each of you promote to Place

‘ Of

‘ Of *Trust* and *Honour*, that among you none
‘ In Pity hath inform’d me, that my Son
‘ Hath stirred up my Servant War to make ;
‘ And both my *Crown* and *Life* away to take ?’

This unexpected Speech, the Courtiers strook,
Amaz’d they stand, and on each other look.
Each Man among them knew himself to be
From treasonable Combination free.
For though their Love to *David* did remain :
Yet did they still their *Loyalty* retain.
But when the King’s *stern Visage* they beheld,
His *pouting* Lips, his Cheeks with Anger *swell’d* ;
His *stormy* Brow ; his *fiery sparkling* Eye ;
His *foaming* Mouth, with *Fury* drawn awry ;
His *fuming* Breath, puff’d like a smoking Brand ;
A *trembling* Motion in his *restless* Hand :
Tho’ free from *Guilt*, they were not free from *Fear* ;
Knowing how apt he was to cast the Spear.

While thus the Courtiers in a silent Maze,
Upon the King, and one another, gaze ;
Forth *Doeg* step’d, sprung from the *Edomites*,
Of Herdsmen chief, and chief of *Parasites* :
The same who, t’other Day, with leering Eye,
Did *David* in the Tabernacle spy.
He now, to *curry Favour* with his Lord,
Told how the *Priest* and *David* did accord.
How he himself at *Nob* had lately been,
And *David* with *Abimelech* had seen.

How

How kind the *Priest* ; how ready to enquire
Of God, in *David's* Case, at his Desire.

Adding, The *Priest* with Food had *David* stor'd,
And arm'd him also with *Goliab's* Sword.

In short, he told whate'er *Abitub's* Son

Had unto *David* said, or for him done:

And in such Terms the Matter did relate,

As were most apt the King to irritate.

Hiding what would have free'd the *Priest* from
blame,

That *David* went, as in the Royal Name.

The King in Pain, thro' Rage, too closely pent,

Within his swollen Breast, for want of Vent,

Was glad this Charge against the *Priests* to hear :

Resolving to discharge his Fury there.

Forthwith a *Pursevant* was sent to bring

The *Priests* from *Nob*, before the wrathful King.

The *Priests* the Royal Summons to obey,

Immediately advanc'd upon the Way ;

And in a Body, with a good Intent,

Themselves, at *Gibe'ab*, to the King present.

No sooner did the King the *Priests* espy,

But with a frowning Brow, and flaming Eye

Upon them fix'd : He to the *Pontiff* brake

His Mind, in Accents which his Fury spake.

' Hear now, said he, *Abitub's* Son (whose Word

To him again was, *Here am I my Lord*)

' Why

- ‘ Why hast thou with a *treasonable* Mind,
- ‘ Against thy Lord, with *Jesse’s* Son combin’d?
- ‘ Thy Treason’s plain. For first ye did *conspire*
- ‘ Against my Life ; then of the Lord enquire :
- ‘ That thereby he, to rise against me, might
- ‘ Embold’ned be, his Sov’reign Lord to smite:
- ‘ Thou with Provisions too didst him supply,
- ‘ That he, as now he doth, in wait might lye.
- ‘ Nay, thou into his Hand a *Sword* didst put,
- ‘ That he my Head might from my Shoulders cut.

So spake the King (And more, perhaps, had spoke,
 But that his *Choler* did him almost *choak*.)
 To whom *Abimelech*, with due Respect,
 Return’d an Answer, much to this Effect.

- ‘ May’t please the King, what Service I have done
 - ‘ For *David*, was as *David* was thy Son ;
 - ‘ Thy Son-in-Law, who always freely went
 - ‘ On whatsoever Service by thee sent.
 - ‘ One whom the King admitted to his Table ;
 - ‘ And in thy House was always honorable.
 - ‘ Nor thought I any one more true to thee,
 - ‘ Amongst thy great Retinue, than was he.
 - ‘ So may he prove ! If otherwise he be,
 - ‘ His being so was never known to me.
 - ‘ ’Twas in thy Bus’ness, that he said he came.
 - ‘ Nor had I him receiv’d : but *in thy Name*.
 - ‘ Did I then *first* to seek the Lord begin
 - ‘ For him, that this should now be made my Sin?
- ‘ Have

- ‘ Have I not *oft* before for him enquir’d ?
- ‘ Yet ne’er before was charg’d to have conspir’d.
- ‘ From me far be it, e’er to entertain.
- ‘ A Thought that may my Loyalty distain.
- ‘ And from the King, far be it too I pray,
- ‘ Unto his Servant’s Charge this Thing to lay.
- ‘ Or to my Father’s House : for we are clear ;
- ‘ And can our Innocency make appear.
- ‘ God is my Witness, what I speak is true :
- ‘ Thy Servant of this Matter nothing knew.’

So spake the reverend *Abimelech*,
And with his last Words bow’d his aged Neck.
The other Priests, to shew they did agree
To what he said, bow’d ev’ry Man his Knee.

So *just* the Priest’s Defence was, and so clear,
Unto the Standers by, did he appear ;
That all the Courtiers ready were to shout
For Joy : When, on a suddain, *Saul* broke out,
And, with a Vehemence of Voice, did cry,
Tbou, thou Ahimelech, shalt surely die,
And all thy Father’s House. O cruel Word !
More cruel Mind ! to be by all abhorr’d.
Abhorr’d it was : Each Courtier hung his Head,
And ev’ry Face grew *pale* which had been *red*.
The dismal Sentence did with *Horror* strike
The Hearers: deep-fetch’d Sighs shew’d their dislike.
A trembling Murmur at one Side began :
And, spreading, through the whole Assembly ran :
Which

Which ended in an universal *Groan* ;
Enough to melt all *Hearts*, but those of *Stone*.

C H A P. III.

HOW miserable is the State of those,
Whose *Frame of Government* doth them expose
To arbitrary *Pow'r* ! Where *Law's* unknown !
Nor any Man can call his *Life* his own !
Where *Innocency* is of little *Force* !
Because impartial *Justice* hath no *Course*.
Where one *Mans' Rage* keeps all the rest in awe ;
Whose *Will* and *Pleasure* are his only *Law* !

O how much better is their *Case*, who live
Under a *Constitution*, which doth give
To ev'ry Man, in *Government*, a *Share* :
And binds the whole to have of each a *Care*.
Where even-handed *Justice* freely flows :
And each the *Law*, he must be try'd by, knows.
Where none by *Pow'r* can be oppress'd ; because
Both *Prince* and *People* subject are to *Laws*.
None there an *arbitrary Sentence* fears ;
Since none can be condemn'd but by his *Peers* :
Whose common *Int'rest* doth them wary make,
How they their *Fellow's Life* away do take.
For the same *Sentence*, wherewith they condemn
Another, may be shortly turn'd on them.
These too th' accused *Party* may reject
If their *Indifferency* he suspect :

And,

And, ne'er so mean, may for his *Birth-right* stand
Fair Tryal, and full Hearing may demand.

Prize your good Fortune, ye, whose Lot is fell
Under so good a Government to dwell.
Where no *dispensing Pow'r* can make a Breach,
Upon your Freedoms: nor your Persons reach.
But all ye have, Life, Liberty, Estate,
Is safe by Law; which none can *abrogate*
Without your own Consents. Be therefore wise:
And learn, so great a Benefit to prize.
Look to't: Be watchful, none, by any Wile,
You of so rich a *Jewel* e'er beguile.

Ah! had the Government of *Saul* been such,
He had not dar'd the Priests of *Nob* to touch,
Who never were, by legal Proof, convicted
Of that, for which he on them Death inflicted:
Who had themselves from all Suspicion clear'd;
And blameless unto all, but him appear'd.

But he, whose lawless Will for Law was put,
Resolving off those Innocents to cut;
Commands his Guards to turn, without Delay,
Upon the Priests of God, and them to slay.
Alledging (to encourage them thereto)
That they with trait'rous *David* had to do:
And that they *David's* Flight, altho' they knew it,
Concealed had from him; and did not shew it.

He thought that they his Power did contemn :
 And, in himself, he vow'd Revenge on them.
 He chaf'd extremely too, to think that he
 Should, by his Guards, no more regarded be.
 Then *Fury* boiling in him, to its Height,
 He singles out the brutish *Edomite*,
 Th' Informer, *Doeg*, bidding him to fall,
 Upon the sacred Priests, and slay them all.

Not backwarder, the Yeomen of the Guard
 Themselves had shew'd (Men mostly rough & hard)
 Then forward he, *Saul's* Pleasure to fulfil :
 And strait a Sea of righteous Blood to spill.
 Forthwith himself he to the Work address'd,
 And in *Abimelech's* unspotted Breast
 His thirsty Sword did sheath. The aged Sire
 Did not Resist ; did not a Foot retire :
 But, with undaunted Resolution, stood
 The Stroke ; 'till in a Stream of Purple Blood,
 His Life expiring, to the Ground he press'd :
 A glorious *Pattern* leaving to the Rest.
 They, without Terror, did his Death behold :
 And, by his brave Example, grew more bold.

Ah ! Had not cursed *Doeg* (the Disgrace
 Of all Mankind, as well as *Edom's* Race)
 Been, in his Nature, savager, than were
 The fiercest Beasts committed to his Care :
 The awful Aspect of *Abimelech*,
 Had been enough, the *Russian's* Mind to check :

Whose goodly Personage, and Manly Face,
An unaffected *Gravity* did grace.
His Milk-white Beard, unto his spotless Breast,
Itself extending, thereupon did rest.
And, in his *Sacerdotal Robes* attir'd,
Was worthily both loved and admir'd.

But graceless *Doeg*, of a graceless Kind,
Bred among *Beasts*, to *Brutishness* inclin'd ;
By shedding Blood, more bloody-minded grew,
And on the other Priests, with Fury flew.
They, undismay'd, themselves prepare to die ;
Not one resists, not one attempts to fly :
But, having God, whose Priests they were, implor'd ;
They yield their spotless Breasts to *Doeg's* Sword.
He, in their Blood, did bathe his reeking Blade ;
And, on the soiled Earth, them breathless laid.
The bloody Wretch their Bodies hew'd and tore,
And warm he left them weltring in their Gore ;
All Man by Man : Nor did he leave alive.
One Ephod-wearer, out of Eighty Five.

Thus fell the Priests of God. Thus bleeding lay
The Tribe of *Levi* ; slaughter'd in a Day :
Butcher'd by barb'rous Hands, without all Cause ;
Against Religion, Reason, Right and Laws.
This *Doeg* acted : but 'twas *Saul* that bid.
This *Saul* commanded : and this *Doeg* did.

The hard'ned King, thus having fed his Eyes,
With this, to him delightful, Sacrifice :

To carry on his *Vengeance* to the Height,
 The City *Nob* too with the Sword did smite.
 No living Soul therein his Fury left,
 But, whatsoever breath'd, of Life bereft.
 Men, Women, Children, Oxen, Asses, Sheep,
 His slaught'ring Sword, at once away did sweep.
 O horrid Act ! on his Part most unjust ;
 As done to answer a revengeful Lust :
 But *just* from God ; who, his denounced * *Will*
 Against old *Eli's* House, did thus fulfill.

C H A P. IV.

WHILE thus King *Saul* his Forces did imploy,
 His well-deserving Subjects to destroy ;
David, still uninform'd thereof, was bent
 The Sacking of rich *Keilab* to prevent.

To his Retreat th'unwelcome News was brought,
 That the *Philistines* against *Keilab* fought,
 And robb'd the Threshing-Floors. His gen'rous
 Mind

To raise the Siege, and save the Town inclin'd.
 He therefore quickly of the Lord enquires :
 The sacred Answer quickned his Desires.
 Most clear the Answer was : Yet he was fain,
 His Men misdoubting, to enquire again.
 For they who were in daily Fear that *Saul*,
 With all his Forces, would upon them fall ;

E 3

Were

* 1 Sam. ii. 23.

Were loth, for others sakes, their Strength to break,
And make themselves, for their Defence, more weak.
But when, the second Time enquir'd, the Lord
A more confirming Answer did afford ;
With Promise that, observing his Command,
He'd give the *Philistines* into their Hand.
Fear overcome, they drew up Man by Man ;
Their valiant Leader marching in the Van.

To *Keilab* come, unlooked for by all,
He on the *Philistines* did briskly fall ;
And with a dreadful Slaughter all did smite,
Who sought not Safety in a timely Flight.

The Seige thus rais'd, & *Keilab's* Coasts now clear'd
From those Assailants she so justly fear'd,
Into the Town victorious *David* entred
(For whose Deliv'rance he his Life had vent' red).
Leading a *Booty*, which his Sword did win
From the defeated Host of *Philistin*.
The gladdened *Keilites* all their Wits employ,
To manifest their *Gratitude* and *Joy* :
And well they might, with *Civick Garland* crown
His Temples who from Spoil had sav'd their Town.

Encourag'd greatly with this good Success
Was *David*, and his Followers no less.
They joy together. But how meer a Toy
How momentary is all human Joy !
This glimm'ring Glance of Sun-shine soon was past,
And their *Horizon* blacker Clouds o'ercaft.

The

The Triumph yet was hardly well begun
 When young *Abiathar*, *Abimelech's* Son,
 (Who from the Sword, by Providence, was freed
 To propagate a Sacerdotal Seed)
 Came panting in; with Sweat besmear'd and Dust,
 And, almost breathless, thro' the Concourse thrust.

To *David* come, with many a Sigh and Sob
 He tells the horrid Tragedy of *Nob* :
 How the High-Priest, with all his Priestly Train,
 And every living Soul at *Nob* was slain.
 Could you have seen, with what a mournful Look,
 Poor *David* these amazing Tidings took ;
 Ye would have doubted, whether in his Face
Astonishment, or *Grief*, had greater Place.
 So *Jephtha* look'd, when, to his great Surprise,
 His Daughter met him for a Sacrifice.
 The Suddenness and Strangeness of the Deed ;
 Horror in *David*, and Amazement breed.
 His Grief was equal : for he knew full well,
 This Evil, for his Sake, the Priests besel.
 The Thought, with Anguish, pierc'd his gen'rous
 More deeply, than can be by Words exprest. [Breast
 The *Infants*, with their *Mothers*, he laments :
 And that he e'er saw *Nob*, too late repents.
 The Priests unrighteous Murder doth bemoan
 No less, than if their Case had been his own.
 He all their Deaths bewails : but most his Grief
 Abounds for his *Abimelech*, their Chief.
 Unto whose Memory how much he ow'd,
 Could not, he thought, more signally be show'd,

Than by accumulating Favours on
Abiathar, his sole-surviving Son.

With kind Embraces therefore he doth cheer
The down-cast Youth ; and bids him cast off Fear.
Assuring him that, since their common Fate
Made them joint Objects of *Saul's* causeless Hate ;
He special Care would of his Safety take,
Both for his own, and for his Father's Sake :
Whose well-deservings of him, he should find,
Were deeply graven in a grateful Mind.

To *David* now Intelligence was sent,
By some Well-wisher, that King *Saul* was bent
To shut him up in *Keilab* ; and to take
Him Pris'ner ; or destroy it for his Sake.
This made him lay all other Thoughts aside,
And for his own Security provide.

Could *David* on the *Keilites* have rely'd,
That they would have stood faithful to his Side :
He durst have held the Town against the King,
And all the Forces in his Pow'r to bring.
For *Keilab* was a Place of Strength ; and more,
Had all Provisions, for a Seige, in Store.
But, doubting how the Citizens might hold,
Against the Force of *Steel*, or Pow'r of *Gold* ;
He to the sacred Oracle did go,
Saul's Purpose, and the *Keilites* Faith to know.
The Answer was, *Saul will come down* : and *they*,
To save themselves, *will thee to him betray*.

This

This Answer, from the Oracle, receiv'd,
Made *David*, of the *Keilites* Help bereav'd,
Resolve to lead his slender Band from thence,
And seek a Place, of more secure Defence.
He durst himself and Men no longer trust
With them, who were too *fearful* to be *Just* :
For well he knew, where pressing Fears prevail,
Fidelity and *Friendship* quickly *fail*.
Ungrateful *Keilab* therefore he forsook,
And to the Wilderness himself betook :
The Wilderness of *Ziph*, where he might be,
In all Appearance, from Betrayers free.

Here Noble *Jonathan* (whose virtuous Love,
In greatest Dangers, did itself approve)
By secret Ways, to *David* did repair :
Whose Heart was almost overwhelm'd with Care.

As pensive Lovers feel a suddain Cheer,
On seeing th' Object of their Love appear,
So *David* (at the unexpected Sight
Of *Jonathan*, his very Soul's Delight)
Forgetting all his Fears, and Sorrows past,
With gladsome Smiles his faithful Friend embrac'd :
Who such Returns of hearty Love did make,
As well the Firmness of his Friendship spake.
Then to a shady *Pine* they jointly walk ;
And, 'twixt themselves, of *David's* Troubles talk :

No need had *David* now himself to moan :
His Friend knew how to make his Case his own.
He

He kindly to him spake, and had a Word
Of Comfort, to confirm him in the Lord.
Bid him not fear ; but in the Lord confide,
Who was (he could assure him) on his side.
Told him, the Lord would cover him, that *Saul*
Should be unable to effect his Fall.
And, *Prophet-like*, foretold him that the Throne
Of *Israel* should one Day be his own :
And he himself the next in Dignity.
(Unhappy Man ! Who others Fate could see,
But not his own.) Thus having cheer'd his Friend,
And Time requiring, they their Conf'rence end.
And then, before the Lord, they both renew
Their Covenant ; and, Kissing, bid Adieu.

C H A P. V.

AS in the Winter, *Show'rs* and *Storms* succeed
To Sun-shine, which to *Travellers* do breed
More *Toil* and *Hardship*, than the *transient* Smile
Of *Sol* gave Comfort, which they had e'er while :
So after *David's* Heart had been made glad,
By the kind Visit which he lately had,
Fresh *Storms* arose ; his Troubles now grew more,
And Dangers greater than they were before.
Saul furiously approach'd, and well he knew,
With num'rous Forces, and his own but few.
Saul only wanted Knowledge where he lay ;
And some, he knew, would guide him to his Prey.
The

The *pick-thank Zephites* (in whose trackless Wood
Th' afflicted Prince, with his Retinue stood)
To curry Favour, hasten to the King ;
And where poor *David* was, glad Tidings bring :
Engaging, if he came without Delay,
They *David* would into his Hands betray.

Attentive Ears to all the *Zephites* told,
The King did lend, and smoothly them cajoll'd ;
Bestow'd a graceless Blessing on the Band,
Begg'd them to go again, and understand
More fully all his *Haunts*, and closely spy
The lurking Places, where he us'd to lye,
And bring him Word : Away the *Zephites* post.
But *David* had, mean while, forsook their Coast ;
And to the Wilderness of *Maon* gone :
The Plain that's on the South of *Jeshimon*.
This when *Saul* heard, he thither bent his Course ;
Resolving to prevail by *Fraud* or *Force* :
So swiftly he pursu'd, he *David* found,
And him, and all his Men, environ'd round.

Great was the Straight poor *David* now was in :
So great, he never had in greater been.
No Hope to conquer, nor no Way to fly :
Nothing remained, but to *Fight* or *Die*.
When lo ! A Messenger came panting in,
And told the King, the bloody *Philistin*
Invaded had the Land ; and all was lost
(At least, that lay upon the bord'ring Coast)

Unless

Unless he came with Speed : Therefore, O King,
He cry'd, make no Delay ; thy Forces bring
To save thy Land, and let the King make haste,
Before the Country be laid wholly waste.

This startling Message made the King with speed
Return : and *David* from his Danger freed.
Thus God sometimes, by unexpected Ways,
Relief to his distressed Ones conveys ;
Exciting others upon them to fall,
Who would the *Righteous*, without Cause, enthrall.

This great Deliv'rance, with a thankful Heart,
To God ascrib'd, thence *David* doth depart,
And, with his little Band of Men did hie
Unto the Fortresses of *Engedi* :
A Place of greater Strength, and whence he might,
If over-press'd, secure himself by Flight :
Concluding right, 'twould not be long e'er *Saul*,
With greater Forces, would upon him fall.
His Expectation fail'd not : for the King,
The *Philistins* repell'd, doth with him bring
Three Thousand chosen Men ; Men he had try'd,
In whose Fidelity he could confide :
And now himself, with pleasing Hopes, he fed,
That he should *David* take, alive or dead.

But God, who oft on wicked Men doth bring
The Hurts they plot, 'gainst others ; did the King
Cast single into *David's* Hands. Now He
Might, with one Stroke, himself for ever free
From

From *Saul's* Pursuits. For *Saul* had, from his Men,
At Nature's Call, retir'd into a Den ;
(His *Royal Robe* he laid aside the while,
Left any Tinct' the Garment should defile)
Not thinking *David* in the Cave had been,
Or that he had, by Human Eye been seen.

Who, but a *David*, would have let his Foe,
At such Advantage found, in Safety go !
No small Temptation to him it must be,
To fet himself from all his Troubles free :
His firm Attendants too their Lord provoke,
To strike himself, or let them give the Stroke.

But he, whose noble Breast was thoroughly fill'd
With loyal Principles, from Heav'n instill'd,
(Not liking too, in Case he should succeed
Unto the Crown, his Subjects such a Deed
For President should have) with brave Disdain
Of such a Fact, his Foll'wers did restrain.

Yet, that the King might sensible be made,
How causlessly he was of him afraid ;
He gently stept to where the Garment lay,
And, undiscerned, cut the Skirt away.
Then drawing back, he waited 'till the King,
His Robe resum'd, went forth ; and following,
He, at a Distance, well secur'd, did stand
(Having the *Lappet* of the Robe in's Hand)
And with extended Voice, but *bumble* Speech,
Obeisance made, he did the King beseech

To

To view the *Skirt* ; an Evidence, quoth he,
Of *Innocence* and *Loyalty* in me :
For well thou may'st conclude, when I so near
Unto thee was, unseen ; I could my Spear
As easily into thy Side have put,
As from thy Garment I the *Skirt* did cut.
But that thy Life, O King, to me was dear,
In that I did not hurt thee, doth appear.

So well his *righteous* Cause did *David* plead,
(Having none else for him to intercede)
So did he manifest his *Innocence*,
So clear'd himself from all surmiz'd Offence :
So earnestly upon the Lord did call,
Judgment to give betwixt himself and *Saul* :
That *Saul* observing, did confounded stand,
Amaz'd to see his *Skirt* in *David's* Hand :
The Sight of which convinc'd him, *David* could
At the same Time have slain him, if he would.
This satisfy'd him, that his Life he ow'd
To *David's* Mercy, which from Virtue flow'd.
The Sense whereof made him first weep, then cry
‘ *Thou, my Son David, art more just than I :*
‘ For thou, for all the *Evil* I have done
‘ To thee, hast me rewarded *well* my Son.
‘ What Man his Foe, at such Advantage found,
‘ Would spare ! Thy Goodness doth to me abound.
‘ Wherefore the Lord reward thee good, I pray,
‘ For thy great Kindness shewn to me this Day.
Then adding, ‘ Now, behold, by this I know
‘ The *Israelitish* Crown to thee shall go :

‘ And

' And that the Kingdom shall establish'd be
 ' On thee, and thine, by Heaven's just Decree.
 ' Swear therefore, said he, to me, by the Lord,
 ' That thou wilt Mercy to my Seed afford :
 ' And not for my Offence, cut off the same,
 ' But leave me in my Father's House, a Name.'

His *Title* to the Kingdom *David* knew,
 Better than *Saul* ; and whence that Title grew :
 Ev'n from the *sacred Oil*, which, on his Head,
 The *Prophet* had by God's Appointment shed.
 Wherefore, to humour *Saul*, he to him sware.
 Which done, *Saul*, straitway homeward did repair.
 But *David* who too well the King did know
 To trust him ; up unto the Hold did go.

C H A P. VI.

THE Prophet *Sam'el* now resign'd his Breath
 To God who gave it. To lament whose Death
 And, with a due Regard to solemnize,
 In publick Manner his sad *Obsequies* ;
 The *Israelites*, with one Consent, did hie
 To *Ramah*, where he liv'd, and was to lie.
 And that the King, who lov'd to seem devout,
 Would give Attendance there, we need not doubt.
 This gave poor *David* some few Days of Ease,
 And from his Fears did him a-while release.

To

To *Paran* now, new Quarters seeking, he
Remov'd his little Camp from *En-gedi*:
From Wilderness to Wilderness; where still
To get Provisions would require his Skill.

Here, Wants encreasing, he to Mind did call,
That long before he fled the Face of *Saul*,
There liv'd a *wealthy* Miser on that Coast,
Who of his great Possessions us'd to boast.

Besides a *Thousand* Goats, *Three Thousand* Sheep,
His *Hindes*, in *Carmel*, constantly did keep.
So great a *Flock* must many Hands imploy
(Many a *lusty* Man, and *sturdy* Boy)
To keep, and shear the *Sheep*, and wind the *Wool*:
Nor would a little keep their Bellies full.
Great Store of Victuals therefore must be drest,
In such an House; although there were no *Guest*:
And Custom had prevail'd to that Degree,
To ev'ry Friend the Shearing Feast was free.

This *David* well considering, and hearing
That this rich Neighbour had begun Sheep-shearing,
Thought it a proper Time for him to try,
Whether his *Wealth* was mixt with *Charity*.
He therefore chose out ten young Men, who were
Of his Retinue, them he bid repair
To go to *Nabal* (for that was the Name
Of this rich Man) and when to him they came,
They, in their Master's Name, should him salute,
In such Terms as his Humour best might suit.

With

With *Peace*, said he, to him, his House, and all
 Whate'er he doth possess, both Great and Small.
 When thus ye have address'd him, tell him I,
 Who might Command, entreat his *Courtesy*.
 Which to excite, put him in Mind, that we
 From doing Hurt to him, or his, are free.
 For Proof of which we boldly dare appeal
 To his own Servants : May but he so deal
 With us, as we by them have dealt, while they
 Among us fed his Flocks from Day to Day.
 Then close your Message thus, *Since we are come*
In a good Day ; give us, we pray thee, some
Of thy Provisions : that thy Servants may
To David thy Beneficence convey.

Thus *David's* Servants, unto *Carmel* come,
 To *Nabal* spake. But he, with *Aspect* glum,
 And scornful Tone ; said, *Who is David ! Who,*
 The Son of *Jesse !* Many Servants do
 Break, now a-days, each from his Lord, that he
 Himself may, from his due Obedience, free.
 And would you have me take my Bread and Meat,
 (Provisions for my Guests, and Men to eat)
 And squander 'em to such ; I neither know
 From whence they come, nor whither they may go.

This surly Answer did the Men so scare,
 That they (like *modest Beggars*, as they were)
 Not pressing further, to their Lord return :
 And, with the Story, make his Spirits burn.

F

For

For he no sooner heard, with what Despight,
The brutish *Clown* his just Request did slight ;
But, in a high *Resentment* of th' *Affront*,
(And Resolution to take Vengeance on't)
He to his Soldiers forthwith gave the Word,
Arm, Arm with Speed : And, girding on his Sword,
Drew forth *Four Hundred*; which he thought enough
(Leaving the Rest to guard the Camp and Stuff)
And with a *stormy* Mind, and *martial* Heat,
March'd on, bestowing many a direful *Threat*
On *Nabal* now, who single must not fall ;
But he, and his own Family withal.

In vain, said *David*; have I safely kept
This Fellow's Flocks, while he securely slept.
He might a *civil* Answer sure have sent,
If he, to part with nothing, was so bent.
I'll take such Veng'ance on th' ungrateful Wretch,
That others may from him Example fetch.

While thus enraged *David* made such haste,
Nabal to slay, and his whole House lay waste ;
Propitious Providence, whose piercing Eye
Sees all Mens Deeds, and Thoughts too from on high,
And with a secret, over-ruling Arm,
As well from doing, as receiving Harm ;
Doth his preserve : did now contrive a Way,
David, from shedding guiltless Blood, to slay.
Such Means too oft, through *stupid* Ignorance,
Are weakly plac'd to *Accident*, or *Chance*,

By

By thoughtless Men : though others clearly see
They are th' Effects of a divine Decree,
Which oft thro' *Instruments* are brought to pass ;
As this, whereof we now are speaking, was.

For *Nabal*, though himself a Fool, or mad,
(As e'en his very Name imports) yet had
A well-accomplish'd Wife, *discreet and wise*,
Fair-spoken, full of *virt'ous Qualities* :
Who oft her Husband's *Rudenefs* did bewail,
And seek to hide : Her Name was ABIGAIL.

To her a Servant (who had seen and heard
His Master's foul Behaviour, justly fear'd
The dire Effects of 't) hast'ned to th' Intent,
That she, forewarn'd, the Mischief might prevent.

Mistress, said he, *David*, to whom, we know,
The Safety of ourselves and Flocks we owe ;
Who hath so kind a Neighbour been, that, since
He came to live among us, a Defence
He hath been to us, both by Night and Day,
Securing us from Thieves, and Beasts of Prey :
This *courteous Prince* hath to our Master sent
Ambassadors, both with a *Complement*
Of *Gratulation*, and a small Request ;
That he'd admit him (as an *absent Guest*)
To be *Partaker*, in some sort at least,
Of the Abundance of his Shearing-Feast.

But oh! our Master, who, thou know'st too well,
 Is so ungovern'd, that if one but tell
 A civil Message to him, he will fall
 Foul on him, like a Son of *Belial*.
 So did he now at *David's* Men let fly
 A rude *Invective*, full of *Railery*
 Against their Master, and them back hath sent
Empty of Food: but *full of Discontent*.
 Consider therefore, *Mistress*, what to do,
 For quick diverting the impending Blow:
 For *Evil*, if not stopt, is like to fall
 Upon our *Master*, and, through him, us all.

Not without great Surprise, we may suppose,
 Th' attentive Dame did hear such Words as those:
 Which she had reason to believe were true;
 For she too well her Husband's Temper knew.
 But being of a well-composed Mind
 (To all Men just, and to her Husband kind)
 She did not think it was a proper Season,
 With him, of his ill Carr'age then to reason:
 But hasten all she could, to go, and try
 If she the injur'd Prince could pacify.

Her Husband therefore not consulted, she
 A Present took of what might likely be
 To gain Acceptance, [*Bread, Wine, Flesh* well-drest,
Figs, Raisins, Parched-Corn] all of the best,
 In good Proportion; which, on Asses laid,
 She sent before her; and, for haste, ne'er staid

Her

Her self to deck ; but, in her common Dress,
Sped after, bending to the Wilderness.

As down the Hill she rode, her watchful Eye
Did *David*, with his Men descending, spy
From th' adverse Hill : at equal Distance set,
They, in the interjacent Valley met.

Come near to *David*, from her Afs she leapt,
And, with submissive Look, first forward stept
A Pace, or two: then *prostrate* at his Feet
She fell ; and modestly the Prince did greet :

‘ On me, my Lord, I pray, on me let lye
‘ The Punishment for this Iniquity.
‘ Let not my Lord this Man of *Belial* heed,
‘ *Nabal* ; whose Name and Nature are agreed
‘ So well, that by his Name is well exprest
‘ The *Folly* which doth in his Bosom rest.
‘ Resent it not. But let thine *Handmaid* stand
‘ ’Twixt him and thee ; subject to thy Command.
‘ Yet give me leave, I pray, to speak a Word,
‘ A *Word in Season*, to my honour’d Lord :
‘ Which shall benothing but the Truth ; that so,
‘ Thou mayst the right State of the Matter know,
‘ For of a Truth, my Lord, I did not see
‘ The *Messengers* that came to him from thee :
‘ Nor of the Matter did one Tittle hear,
‘ Till they were gone : and then both *Shame & Fear*
‘ Did spur me on, to hasten to my Lord,
‘ And bow my Neck unto thy right’ous Sword.

‘ Strike, if thou please : Yet give me leave to say,
 ‘ The Lord will thee avenge another Way.
 ‘ Stain not thine Hand with Blood, but to the Lord
 ‘ Refer thy Cause ; who can, without thy Sword,
 ‘ Revenge thy Wrongs : May who seeks ill to thee,
 ‘ Be in like Case as *Nabal* soon will be.’

Then humbly offering him the Things she brought,
 Her Present to accept she him besought.

And raising her Discourse to higher Things ;
 (Such as concern’d the *Kingdom*) home she brings
 The Matter to himself : and thus apply’d
 The Case to him ; as if she prophesy’d.

‘ Because, my Lord, thou dost his Battles fight,
 ‘ The Lord of Hosts in thee doth take delight.
 ‘ He’ll make thee a *sure House*, wherein to dwell ;
 ‘ And set thee on the Throne of *Israel*.
 ‘ Thy Head shall wear the *Israelitish* Crown,
 ‘ And thou shalt live and die in high Renown.
 Then, giving *Saul* some (*not unwelcome*) Blows,
 She thus to *David* her Discourse did close.
 ‘ When thou hast found the Lord deal well with thee,
 ‘ Remember that it was foretold by me.’

This said, she stopt: But not before the Lord
 Had *David* quite disarm’d (Not of his Sword,
 But) of his Anger, and that hot Displeasure,
 Which, in his Breast, had boil’d beyond due Measure.
 He now is chang’d: His *Heat* is now allay’d,
 And, looking on fair *Abigail* he said,

‘ Blest

‘ Blest be the God of *Isr’el* who this Day
 ‘ Sent thee to meet, and stop me on the Way.
 ‘ Blessed be thy Advice : and blessed be
 ‘ Thou too, for giving it. Whereby thou me
 ‘ Prevented hast from shedding Blood ; which I
 ‘ To do, had’st thou not come, was very nigh.
 ‘ I did the Injury too high Resent :
 ‘ And, to Revenge as high, was fully bent.
 ‘ But now from Thoughts of Violence I cease,
 ‘ And gladly send thee back again in Peace.
 ‘ Return, fair Dame, return : for I rejoyce,
 ‘ That I have heard ; and heark’ned to thy Voice.
 ‘ Thy Virtues good Impressions in me leave ;
 ‘ And I thy Present gratefully receive.
 ‘ Thy wise Behaviour hath Atonement made,
 ‘ For the Offence thy Husband’s Rudeness laid.’
 Then parting, he unto his Camp retir’d ;
 She to her House : he, her ; she him admir’d.

C H A P. VII.

WHEN *Abigail* returned Home, she found
Nabal kept open House ; all things abound
 Ev’n to *Profusion* : such a *lavish* Feast,
 As might have entertain’d a *royal* Guest.
 The Wine so freely flow’d, and he the Cup
 So often took ; so often turn’d it up :
 That he, who was the Master of the Feast,
 Had now *transform’d* himself from *Man* to *Beast* :
 In high Excess he spent the jovial Day,
 And stupid, now, in Drink he snoring lay.

This was no Time to speak to him. But when,
Next Morn, his *little Sense* return'd again ;
She in due order, did to him relate
The *Danger* he had 'icap'd : how near his Gate
David's vindictive Sword had been ; how he,
And all his House were near a Massacre.
How instant Danger o'er them all had hung,
The Cause, his Rudeness and abusive Tongue.

This he no sooner heard, but strait the Thought
Of Danger, he upon himself had brought,
(Though now he knew 'twas over) struck a Dart
Into his *mean*, and *too unmanly* Heart.
His Spirits sunk : and in some Ten Days Time,
Smote by the Lord, his Life went for his Crime.

So great a Man, so *strange* a Death, so *near*
To *David's* Camp, must quickly reach his Ear.
Which when he heard, he blest the Lord, that he
Had both from *Self-avenging* kept him free :
And also had, by an immediate Stroke,
Aveng'd his Cause ; and *Nabal's* Heart had broke.

Then recollecting what a goodly Dame
(With *Beauty, Wisdom, Virtue, Youth* and *Fame*,
Adorned) *Abigail* to him appear'd,
When (to divert the Storm she justly fear'd)
She, as a *Suppliant*, the other Day,
Although with Tears bedew'd, before him lay :
Love kindled in his Heart a *Noble Flame*,
With honour to espouse the lovely Dame.

To her he, therefore, quickly did dispatch
Ambassadors to treat an happy Match
Between them ; let her know how *chaste* a Flame
Possess'd his Breast, and Court her in his Name,
Conduct her safe, that she might be his Wife,
Partaker of his Fortunes, during Life.

The Message told : Wife *Abigail*, who knew
How *Great*, how *Good*, how *Wise*, how *Just*, how *True*,
Prince *David* was ; how *pious* and how *dear*
To *God*, and also to the *Crown* how *near* ;
Did not *take State* upon her, nor require
Time to consider, and be *courted higher*.
But, by an humble Phrase, express'd Consent ;
And mounting, well attended, with them went
To *David*, who, with Joy, did her receive :
And each, in Heart, did to the other cleave.

About this Time too, or not long before,
David (who long had been afflicted sore,
For loss of *Michal*, and now hopeless grown,
That he should e'er enjoy her as his own)
Marry'd *Abinoam*, a goodly Dame,
Of *Jezreel*, who out of *Judah* came,
So that he now was doubly Wiv'd, and might
In their sweet Conversation take Delight.

At once was *David* of the Two possess'd,
With *Father's Joy*, and *Brother's Beauty* bless'd :
The first by *Abigail* was signifi'd ;
The latter nam'd his *Jezreelitish* Bride.

This

This made him *Michal's* Absence better bear ;
 Supply'd by Two, so virtuous, and so fair.
 For she, her cruel Father (more to vex
 Poor *David*, and his State the more perplex)
 Had, to another given : and did constrain
 Th' *unwilling* Dame her Nuptial Bed to stain.
 O Impious Man ! who gave her for a Snare
 To *David* (as he stuck not to declare *)
 Which she not proving : In *revengeful* Rage
 He to another did her soon engage.

C H A P. VIII.

A Time of Respite *David* had enjoy'd,
 While *Samu'l's* Funeral the King employ'd.
 A Time of Joy ; wherein he might, at leasure
 Refresh himself with undisturbed Pleasure.
 But now his Troubles hasten on again :
 And he must now repeat his former Pain.
 He now for *Self-Defence* had need prepare,
 Left *Saul* be on him e'er he be aware.

For *Saul* to *Gibeab* was no sooner come,
 But the false *Ziphites* thither to him run,
 Inform him, *David* doth near them reside,
 And in their Woods himself, and Men, doth hide :
 Offer their Service, urge the forward King
 To come ; and with him Strength enough to bring.
 This

* 1 Sam. xviii. 21.

This Invitation, added to the Fire
In *Saul's* own Breast, kindled so strong Desire
Of taking *David*; that he forthwith rose
From *Gib'ab*, and in quest of *David* goes:
Leading *Three Thousand* with him, Men well try'd,
Valiant and strong; in whom he could confide.
These he into the Woods of *Ziph* did draw,
And pitched in the Hill of *Hachilah*.
David, mean while, informed by his Scouts,
That *Saul* lay Camped somewhere there-about,
In th' Ev'ning ventur'd from his Hold to try
Saul's Strength, and Disposition to descry.

Come to the Camp, he saw where *Saul* did lye,
Within the Trench, his *Spear* just sticking by
His Bolster; and a *Cruse* of *Water* near,
His Thirst to quench, and Spirits also cheer.
This seeing, unobserv'd strait back he goes;
Fetches *Abishai*: unto whom he shows
Saul, *Abner*, all the Soldiers fast a-sleep;
No *Centinel* awake, the Watch to keep.

Fain would *Abishai* give the fatal Stroke,
To free his Master from the Tyrant's Yoke;
And much he press'd, and hard he begg'd for Leave
To strike a Blow, might *Saul* of Life bereave.

But Noble *David* (in whose gen'rous Breast
Loyal and pious Principles did rest)

Flatly

Flatly forbid it ; saying *God forbid*
That I should so myself from Trouble rid.
The Lord forbid, that I mine Hand should stretch
Against the Lord's Anointed. Such a Wretch
May I ne'er be ! I'll leave him to the Lord,
Who works by various Ways besides the Sword.
But take, said he, his *Water-Pot* and *Spear* :
By which my *Innocency* may appear.

This, undiscover'd, done, they both withdrew ;
And from a distant Eminence in View,
To *Abner David*, loud, directs his Call,
The gallant *Abner*, *Saul's* brave General :
Alarm'd, he starts, and cries, whose Tongue doth ring
So shrill ? Speak softly : lest thou wake the King.

Ah ! Art not thou a valiant Man ? but where,
Said *David* is thy *Vigilance* and *Care* :
For there came One unto the King's Bed-side,
(Whom none of all your *Centinels* descry'd)
By whom the King might have been slain, had I
Not interpos'd. *Who now deserves to die ?*
And that the Truth thereof may plain appear,
See here his *Cruse* of Water, and his *Spear*.

By this Time *Saul*, awaking with the Noise,
And startling at the Sound of *David's* Voice,
Cry'd, *Is it thou*, my Son ? Yes, yes, it is,
Said *David* : wherein have I done amiss ?
Since I to thee, O King, am always true :
Why ? O why thus dost thou my Life pursue ?

If thou thus hunt'st me by the Lord's Command,
May he accept an *Off'ring* at my Hand.

But if this Mischief, by the Sons of Men,
Be rais'd against me, with Design, O, then
Accursed of the Lord be they, who strive
Me from the Inheritance of God to drive,
As if they said ; to other Gods be gone :

Yet I resolve to serve the Lord alone,

And therefore trust in his Support thro' all,
That to the Earth my Blood may never fall.
How mean a Thing it is, that *Israel's* King
An armed Host into the Field should bring,
To seek a *Flea* ! Are Men of Wisdom wont,
With Armies, after *Patridges* to hunt !
No greater I than these may counted be,
If I, *great Prince*, compared am to thee.

Not more did *David's Rhetorick* prevail
On *Saul*, than that which never us'd to fail
With Him, and such as He, the Sight of's *Spear*
In *David's* Hand : whereby he knew how near
David to him had been, whilst fast a-sleep,
He lay at *David's* Mercy (none to keep
The Stroke off from him) who might with one Blow
Have sent his Soul down to the Shades below ;
Yet did not hurt him. This the better Part
Of *Saul's* ill Nature reach't : and in his Heart
Kindled a Spark of Gratitude ; from whence
Sprang an *Acknowledgement* of his Offence.
Frankly, as once before, in like Distress,
His *Error, Folly, Sin*, he doth confess.

Son *David*, I have greatly sinn'd, said he,
 I beg thy Pardon : pray, Return to me.
 Full well I know, that I have play'd the *Fool*,
 And broke the Precepts taught in *Virtue's* School,
 But never more will I against thee rise :
 Because my Life was precious in thine Eyes.

The Lord, said *David*, once again had put
 Thee in my Pow'r. I eas'ly might have cut
 Thy *Thread* afunder. God so deal with me,
 As I have *Faithful* been, and *Kind* to thee.

When *David* ceas'd, *Saul* did his *Blessing* give:
 Wishing he in Prosperity might live.
 Then parting, *Saul* returned to his Place,
 And *David* to his Camp directs his Pace.

The End of the SECOND BOOK.

DAVIDEIS.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

Long had the *Hebrew Common-Wealth* been torn
 By *Civil Fars*, since first the *sacring Horn*
 On *David's Head*, from *Rev'rend Samuel's Hand*,
 Had empti'd been by *God's exprefs Command*.
 While the tall *Son of Kish*, with armed Force,
 Begirt (the *Flow'r of Israel's Foot and Horse*)
 Left nothing attempted, to bring down
 The *Son of Jess'*, the *Rival of his Crown*:
 The *Princely Youth*, by *Envy doom'd to fall*,
 Because his *Virtues* far exceeded *Saul*:
 Who can recount the *Jeopardies*, which he
 Was daily in, while he was fain to flee;
 From *Cave to Rock*; from one *Hold* to another,
 And *Safety* for his aged *Sire* and *Mother*
 In *Moab* seek; himself enforc'd to fly
 To *Achish*, *Israel's utter Enemy*!
 Who the great *Philistin* so lately slew,
 Is glad now to a *Philistin* to sue

For

For Shelter ; driven, by *domestick* Foes,
 To beg, from *foreign* Enemies, Repose.
Adullum, Mizpeh, Hareth, Keilab, Ziph,
Engedi, Paren, and the craggy Cliff
 Of *Hachilab*, the Rocks, where wild Goats breed,
 Witness the Hardships born by *Jesse's* Seed.

A *Sabbath* now of Years was fully run,
 Since *David's* causeless Troubles first begun ;
 When the *Almighty*, having thoroughly prov'd
 The *Faith* and *Love* of him he thoroughly lov'd.
 Said, 'Tis enough ! And with that Word decreed
 The Means, whereby his *David* should be freed.

The *Philistines* again invade the Land,
 The *tall*, but *trembling* King is at a stand.
 From God departed, he of God is left,
 Of *Counsel*, and of *Courage* both, bereft.
 What Course, in this so great a Streight, to steer
 He wist not ; 'twixt *Necessity* and *Fear*.
 The Prophet, from whose Heaven-inspired Breast,
Counsel did use to flow, was gone to Rest.
 God, nor by *URIM* did, in that Extream,
 Vouchsafe to give an Answer, nor by *DREAM* ;
 Though sought unto. *In vain doth Man expect*
Deliv'rance by the Hand he doth reject.

Deserted thus of God, the *faithless* King
 Himself upon th' *Infernal* Pow'rs doth fling ;
 Consults a *Witch*, and her imploy to raise
 The Prophet *Samuel* ; who many Days

Had

Had with his Fathers slept. O blinded Wretch!
 To think a *silly Witch* had Pow'r to fetch
 A *sacred* Prophet from his *peaceful* Rest;
 Or *Devils* after Death, could *Saints* molest.

Yet by the *Apparition* which she brought,
 Was *Saul* of his approaching Ruin taught;
 And found it true. The *Philistines* prevail'd,
 The Strength of *Isr'el* with their Courage fail'd:
 Numbers were slain; the Rest with Terror fled,
 And *Saul's* Three Sons were found among the Dead;
 He sorely wounded, and in Blood imbru'd,
 By Chariots and by Horsemen close pursu'd,
 Bids his own Squire (lest he should be abus'd)
 Dispatch him quite; but he thro' Fear refus'd;
 Despair then prompting, on his Sword he fell;
 Who durst against the King of Kings rebel.

Such was the End of *disobedient Saul*,
 Whom God the first to *Israel's* Crown did call.
 For not performing God's express Command,
 Perish he must. And that by his own Hand.
 He that spar'd *Agag*, doom'd by God to Death,
 With his own Hand, lets out his vital Breath.
Monarchs, beware. Let this great *Monarch's* Fall
 For ever be a Warning to you all.

C H A P. II.

WHile this so great Discomfiture befel,
For their King's Sake, the Host of *Israel*;
While Streams of reeking Blood did float the Plain,
And *Gilboa* was loaded with the Slain:
The all-commanding Providence took Care
That his *Anointed Prince* should not be there:
And by an extraordinary Way
Kept him from Danger, and from Guilt that Day.

The great Disposer of all human Things,
Who, at his Pleasure, makes, and unmakes Kings;
Who hath the Hearts of Princes in his Hand,
And can our Foes, to be our Friends, command;
He had the Heart of *Gath's* fierce King inclin'd
To be to *David*, in Affliction, kind.

Achish did *Ziklag* unto *David* give,
Where he, with his Retinue, safe might live:
Heap'd Favours on him, promis'd great Rewards;
No less than to be *Captain of his Guards*.
But he must to the Battle with him go,
And help to give his King an Overthrow.

How great a Straight must *David* now be in,
Having no other Choice, than *Death*, or *Sin*!

Death

Death, if he should refuse to fight : and *Sin*,
In fighting *Ifr'el* for the Philistin.
Thus sorely exercis'd, it may be guest,
Such Thoughts as these might fill his troubled Breast.

How can I *draw my Sword* against my King,
And not upon myself the Od'um bring
Of *soul Rebellion* ! I who never durst
Attempt his Life ; although he fought mine first.
I dare not (knowing him by God appointed)
Stretch forth mine Hand against the Lord's
Anointed.

I well recall, how I within was smote,
When I but cut the Skirt from off his Coat.
What may I then expect, but Wrath divine,
If he should fall by any Stroke of mine !

But say, the King were safe : Yet how can I,
Whose Sword hath Troops of *Philistines* made fly ;
Who purchas'd *Michal* with the parted Skins
Of four times Fifty slaughter'd *Philistins* :
I, who the daring'st *Champion* of their Crew
(They looking on) in single Combat slew ;
And (God assisting) with a single Sling,
Deliv'rance did unto my Country bring :
Shall I now for the *Philistines* go fight,
And draw my Sword against an *Ifr'elite* !
Shall I assist God's Heritage to bring
In Thraldom to th' uncircumcised King !
Shall I, upon myself, incur the *Guilt*
Of all the Blood which may that Day be spilt

In *Israel* ! The Lord forbid, that I
Should ever yield to such a Villany.

But yet, if I refuse my Men to lead
With *Achish* to the Field : and cannot plead
A *fair* Excuse ; what can I think, but he
Will thenceforth treat me as his Enemy !
What can I then expect for me, and mine,
But *present Death* ! Or that he will confine
Myself and Men in Prison close, until
He may our Blood with ling'ring Torments spill.

Shall I, this Mischief to prevent, comply
With his Commands, at least-wise *seemingly* !
Shall I unto my present Fortune yield,
And briskly draw my Forces to the Field ;
Shall I with *Achish* to the Battle go ;
As if I were to *Israel* a Foe :
Then, when the Battle's joyned, *wheel about*,
And help to give the *Philistines* a Rout !
No ! That were *base* : And I had rather die,
Than stain mine Honour with such *Treachery*.
Exil'd from mine own Land, I hither fled,
To seek a Shelter for my hunted Head.
I found a *kind Reception* with this Prince :
And in his *Favour* I have stood e'er since.
To me his Bounty hath extended been,
No less than if I were a *Philistine*.
In me he doth repose a *special Trust* :
And God forbid I should be less than *just*.
Ungrateful,

Ungrateful, to a Proverb, I should be,
Should I betray him to his Enemy.

Death rather choose ! than such an *Infamy*
On *David*, on an *Israelite* should lye.

While *David* thus did many Thoughts revolve,
Not knowing what, with Safety to resolve :
(Save, in the *Rear*, with *Achish* on to go,
And wait on God, for Counsel what to do ;)
The God of *David* his D-*liv*'rance wrought,
And fairly him from this Dilemma brought.

The Princes of the *Philistines*, to whom
Their King's new *Favourite* was now become
An *Eye-sore* ; not well pleas'd before to see
Court-Favours heap'd upon a *Refugee* :
And now, observing, that their easie King
Not only *David*, and his Men did bring
To Battle ; but had rang'd them by his Side,
As if in them he chiefly did confide ;
Their Emulation could no longer hide,
But, with a discontented *Murmur*, cry'd,
What do these Hebrews here ! The King would fain
Their Discontents allay : but try'd in vain.
The more he *David's* Courage, Conduct, prais'd :
The more against him he their *Choler* rais'd.
Their Wrath brake forth. *This Fellow make*, said
Return unto his Place ; lest he betray [they,
Us, in the Heat of Fight : and, by that Wile,
Himself unto his Master reconcile.

For, by what Means, can he procure his Peace
With *Saul*, so well as by the Heads of these?

*Command him therefore back : for surely know,
He shall not, with us, to the Battle go.*

They stoutly urge. The King is fain to yield :
And *David* forthwith is dismiss the Field.

*Thus God, when he his Saints hath thoroughly try'd,
Can Ways untought for their Escape provide.*

CHAP. III.

JOY now abounding in his *thankful* Heart,
Jesse's fair Son doth from the Camp depart,
And towards *Ziklag*, with a nimble Pace,
Marches ; his loyal *Consorts* to embrace.
But, e're the Sun thrice set, his Joy was check'd,
By a Disaster he did least expect.

Approaching near the Place, where stood the *Town*,
To his Surprise he found it levell'd down,
Burnt to the Ground, and in its Ashes laid,
And all that was therein away convey'd.
No living Soul was left that might inform
Who were the Authors of this dismal Storm.

Who can conceive the Horror that possess'd
On that afflicting Sight, poor *David's* Breast !
Amaz'd he stood, like one that's struck with *Thunder*,
Fill'd with *Astonishment*, and *silent Wonder*.

His

His *Blood* retiring to his *trembling* Heart,
 Left a *cold Sweat* upon each outward Part.
 Heart-rending Sorrows did, without Controul,
 Imprison all the Powers of his Soul.
 Grief forc'd a *Vent* at last, and out did pour,
 Thorough his *fainting* Eyes, an *easing Show'r* ;
 Tears flow'd amain : He wept, until the Store
 Of Tears was spent ; and he could weep no more.

When *Sighs* did Passage to his Grief afford,
 And *Speech* was to his *falt'ring* Tongue restor'd :
 He more *obdurate* must have been than *Stone*,
 Whose Heart had not been tend'red with his *Moan*.
 The Loss of *Ziklag* something was ; much more
 That of the People, with their wealthy Store :
 But, with the deepest *Groans*, he did bewail
 His lost *Abinoam* and *Abigail*.
 His Sorrows to compleat, his little Host
 (For there was no Man that had nothing lost)
 Were on the Point to *Mutiny*, and fall,
 With Stones, upon their *guiltless* General.

His *Reason* now did to return begin,
 Out of that *Stupor* Grief had plung'd it in ;
 And calling back, with nimble Diligence,
 His Spirits, and his intellect'al Sense :
 His Piety did first itself exert :
Sure Token of a right religious Heart.

Fear, *Bane of noble Actions*, off he shakes,
 And in the Lord his God, *fresh Courage* takes.

His *Blood* enkindles, and his *Spirits* boil
With strong Desire to regain the Spoil,
The living Spoil, (if Life did yet remain
In his Two Consorts, and their youthful Train)
His *flaming* Eye sparkles an angry *Threat*,
And *just* *Revenge* his *active* *Pulses* beat.

Yet would he not on this *Adventure* move,
'Till he had try'd how God would it approve.

How happy should we be ! How would *Success*
Crown all our Actions ! How would Heav'n bless
Our Effays, if in all we undertake,
We first the Lord our *Counsellor* would make.

The *Priest* is call'd. The sacred *Ephod* brought ;
God's Counsel, in his own Direction, sought ;
The Answer is propitious. Out he went,
With his *Six Hundred* Men. *Two Hundred* spent
With their hard March, were by the Rest forsook ;
Not able to get over *Besor*-Brook.

Not far had *David*, with the Rest, advanc'd,
When an *Egyptian*, in the Field, they chanc'd
To find ; who, being sick, and Hunger pin'd,
Was by those sacking *Rovers* left behind.
Him they refreshed with long-wanted Food ;
And by him, when recover'd, understood,
That their *Old* Enemy, th' *Amalekite*,
It was, had done them this so great Despite.

By

By him too, Oath of Safety first be'ng giv'n,
(*Oaths then were lawful*, by the God of Heav'n)
Was *David* guided to the Place, where they
In *jovial Merriment* securely lay.
Of *Ziklag's Dainties* they a *Feast* had made,
And, with their *Plunder*, drove a *merry Trade* ;
From *Eating*, they to *Dancing* fell, and *Drinking* ;
How soon they must the *Reck'ning* pay, not thinking.
When, on a suddain, *David* in doth pour
His Men upon them, like a *Thunder-Show'r*.

Could you observe in what a furious Way,
A *Lion* leaps upon his *trembling* Prey :
So on the *Amalekites* the *Hebrews* flew,
Than *Lions* fiercer ; having in their View
Their *captiv'd* Wives and Children, and the Fire
Of smoaking *Ziklag*, to inflame their Ire.

The Slaughter 'till the next Day's Ev'ning held,
The Earth with Slain was cover'd ; Rivers swell'd
With Blood of *Amalek*, that thither ran ;
For of them all escaped not a Man,
Except Four Hundred who, (perhaps by Night)
On Camels mounted, sav'd themselves by Flight.

During the Time this *bloody Work* did last,
The *Captive* Dames, with Hands and Eyes up-cast,
Implor'd the God of *Israel* to bless
The Arms of their Deliv'ers with Success.
But when destroy'd they saw their Enemies,
Their *thankful* Joy brake through their *sparkling*
Eyes. And,

And, as ANROMEDA, when, from her Chain
 Releas'd, she saw the *frightful Monster* slain :
 So look'd *Abinoam*, so *Abigail*,
 When they their dearest *David* saw prevail.

The Slaughter over, and the Field now clear'd,
 So that no living Enemy appear'd ;
 The *Victors*, and their *new redeemed* Dames
 (Those *Love*, these *Love* and *Gratitude* inflames)
 Together run, with nimble-footed Paces,
 And clasp each other, in most sweet Embraces.
 When they had paid the Debt long due to Love,
 The *Hebrew Captain* did from thence remove :
 And toward *Ziklag* took again his way,
 With his recover'd Spoil, and with the Prey
 Of *Amalek*. To *Besor-Brook* they bend,
 Where his recruited Men did him attend.
 To them, as to the Rest, he doth divide
 Their Share o' th' Booty : and to *Ziklag* hy'd :
 From whence he, of the Spoil, unto his Friends,
 In all the Coasts about, rich Presents sends.

C H A P. IV.

TWO Days in *Ziklag* now had *David* stay'd,
 To view the *Ruins* which the Fire had made.
 But most his Thoughts on *Israel's* Camp did run,
 And fear'd the worst ; not knowing what was done :
 When on the Third, lo, one with Running spent,
 (Earth on his Head, and all his Garments rent)
 Came

Came from the Camp, and falling at his Feet,
Did with good News, as he suppos'd, him greet.

He told, how *Israel* from the Battle fled ;
That of the Soldiers Multitudes were dead :
That *Saul* and *Jonathan* his Son, were slain.
At those great Names, *David* could not refrain :
But forthwith ask'd him, by what means he knew
What he reported of *Saul's* Death was true.
He, hoping some Advantage would accrue,
Confess'd his Prince, at his Request, he flew :
And to confirm the Truth of what he said,
Saul's Crown and *Brac'let* at his Feet he laid.

As one that stooping something up to take,
Claps his unwary Hand upon a *Snake*,
Doth with a suddain Fright, first backward start
(His scared Blood retiring to his Heart)
Then, at a farther Distance, *trembling* stands,
With *fainting* Countenance, and *Palsied* Hands :
So startled *David* at th' unlook'd for Sight
Of that which some would gaze on with Delight,
Th' *Imperial Crown* ; by which he surely knew,
That what the Fellow told him was too true.
Grief seiz'd his Spirit. He with Garments torn,
Together with his Men, for *Saul* did mourn.
For Saul he mourn'd, though *Saul* to him had been
A fiercer Foe, than any *Philistin*.
For Saul he mourn'd, though *Saul* his Life had sought
And him into extreamest Dangers brought.

For

For Saul he mourn'd, though by the Death of Saul,
He knew the Kingdom unto him would fall.
Thus gen'rous Minds, e'en with their Enemies,
In adverse Fortunes can't but sympathize.

For *Jonathan*, as for an only Brother,
Or as a Virgin for her constant Lover :
So mourned he, For 'twixt them two had past
A *Friendship*, that *beyond the Grave* must last.
Immortal Friendship! Never Two were twin'd
More close ; they had *Two Bodies* ; but *One Mind*.
Patroclus to *Achilles* was less dear.
Hylas to *Hercules* not half so near.
Not *Pylades* did more *Orestes* love :
Nor *Damon* to his *Pythias* truer prove.
To *Pirithous* more close not *Theseus*
Did cleave ; nor *Nisus* to *Euryalus*.
Than did to *David* Princely *Jonathan*,
From the blest Day their *Friendship* first began,
Their Souls were so commix'd that none could tell
Which lov'd most truly ; either lov'd so well.
Jonathan's Love to *David* strongly ran :
And *David's* flow'd as strong to *Jonathan*.
So that, e'en yet, we, in a Proverb have it,
[*Strong as the Loves of Jonathan and David*]
'Twas for his Friend ; for such a Friend, as Man
Scarce had before : 'Twas for his *Jonathan*
That *David* mourn'd. And who enough could moan
The Death, *untimely Death*, of such an One.

But

But, from *Particulars*, his Grief did call
 To Mourning, for the Tribes in general.
 The House of *Israel* was wounded deep,
 What *Isra'ite* could hear it, and not weep !
 Not weep a Flood ! the People of the Lord
 Are fallen by th' Uncircumcised's Sword.
 This to his Sorrow set the Flood-gates ope :
 And to his *melting* Grief gave *boundless* Scope :

Nor would his *single* Sorrow serve the Turn:
 But *all his Men* together with him mourn.
Saul's Death and *Jonathan's* he did not fail,
 In most *pathetick* Language, to bewail :
 But sure, the *stifling* Grief, that fill'd his Breast
 For *Isr'el*, could not be in Words exprest.

When Sorrow now its force had somewhat spent,
 And flowing Tears to Grief had given vent :
 The Messenger, who did the Tidings bring,
 Having confest that he did kill the King,
 Was, self-convicted, unto Death appointed,
 And kill'd, for having slain the Lord's Anointed.
 That Justice done, *David* from *Ziklag* rose,
 By God's Direction ; and to *Hebron* goes.

C H A P. V.

HAIL! Noble Hero, Favourite of Heaven,
To whom a Royal Diadem is given!
Welcome to *Hebron*! Lo, thy People bring
Their Presents to their new-elected King.

No sooner was it known, that *Jesse's* Son
Had *Ziklag* left, and was to *Hebron* gone;
But *Judab's* Nobles thither did resort:
And, with a splendid Train, did fill his Court.
Judab, the Tribe to which he did belong:
Judab, the Tribe of all the Tribes most strong.

The Men of *Judab*, as with one Consent,
From all their Cities unto *Hebron* went.
They went, with Hearts full of Affection fraught;
His safe Arrival to Congratulate.
No sooner met, but *David* they instal
King over *Judab*, in the Room of *Saul*.
The sacred Oil they on his Temples shed:
And set the Imperial Crown upon his Head.
The Court they make and all the City ring
With joyful Acclamations to their King.

Scarce were the Coronation Triumphs o'er:
Scarce the new King his Diadem had wore:

When

When he again must draw his late sheath'd Sword.
Short are the Joys external Things afford.

A Son of *Saul's* surviv'd his Father's Death,
 Twice Twenty Years of Age, nam'd *Ishbosheth*.
 Him *Abner* did to *Mahanaim* bring ;
 And o'er the House of *Isr'el* made him King.

Thus *Israel* and *Judah* were divided,
 Whilst either Party with their own King sided.
 Hence Civil Wars between the Tribes arose :
 And former Friends degen'rate into Foes.
 They that were link'd by *Nature*, and by *Grace* ;
 Each other now in hostile Manner chase,
 The Sword devoureth Kin on either Side :
 And *Hebrews* Hands in *Hebrews* Blood are dy'd.

When long these hateful Civil Wars had lasted,
 And *Isr'el's* Strength was thereby greatly wasted,
 (For weaker grew the House of *Saul*, the longer
 The War endur'd, and *David's* House grew stronger)
 Then awful Providence, by Means unthought,
 The War, and Faction, to a Period brought.

To *Rizpah*, who had been *Saul's* Concubine,
 'Twas thought that *Abner* did too much incline.
 This *Ishbosheth* resenting with Disdain,
 Charg'd *Abner* that with *Rizpah* he had lain.
 High-stomach'd *Abner*, who could nothing brook
 That touch'd his Honour, such Displeasure took

At this Reproach ; that he resolv'd to bring
All *Israel* over unto *Judah's* King.
Nor would he in a Covert Manner go
To work: but boldly told his Master so.
Forthwith to *David* Messengers he sent
To make his Peace ; and then in Person went
To *Hebron* : after he had first inclin'd
The *Isr'elitisb* Princes to his Mind.

Him *David* graciously receiv'd, and made
A Royal Entertainment while he staid :
And then in Peace dismiss'd him, to effect
The grand Affair, which *Abner* did project.

Not far from *Hebron* yet was *Abner* gone
When *Joab* entred (*David's* Sister's Son)
Who, on some Military Enterprize,
Had absent been, against the Enemies,
With *David's* Men of War (for, over all
His Uncle's Forces he was *General*)
And, having giv'n his Enemy the Foil
Was just returned laden with the Spoil.

When *Joab* heard, that *Abner* had been there
Receiv'd, and sent away again with Care :
His *Passion* rose so high, it made him fling
Undutiful Reflections on his King.
Zeal he pretended for his Prince's State.
But underneath did lurk *Revenge* and *Hate*.
For 'twas not long before, at *Gibeon* Fight,
That *Abner* and his Men be'ng put to Flight ;

Asabel

Asabel, *Joab's* Brother, him so hard
Pursu'd, that *Abner*, standing on his Guard,
In's own Defence, and sore against his Will,
To save himself, was forc'd the Youth to kill.
His Brother's Blood, in *Joab's* Eye still reeks,
And he a Season to revenge it seeks.

He after *Abner* sends, in *David's* Name,
(Unknown to *David*) to return.—He came.
Deceitful *Joab* receiv'd him at the Gate,
(With feigned Kindness hiding inward Hate)
As if he had some Secret to impart,
Took him aside, and stabb'd him to the Heart.

Thus fell the valiant *Abner*, thus did die
A brave Commander, through base Treachery.
Thus princely *Joab* did his Honour stain
With *Abner's* Noble Blood, ignobly slain.

When unto *David's* Ear the News was brought,
Of the foul Murther, by his Nephew wrought,
It pierc'd his Royal Heart ; apt Words he lack'd
To speak his just Abhorrence of the Fact :
Yet, in unstrained Terms, himself he free'd
From being *Conscious* of so foul a Deed.

' I, and my Kingdom, guiltless are, he said,
' Of *Abner's* Blood : on *Joab* be it laid !
' And may it on his House for ever rest !
' May Sword or Famine him and his infest !

H

' May

‘ May his Posterity be never free
 ‘ From leprous Ulcer, or Infirmary!

Then for the Funeral he Order gave,
 And wept a *Show’r of Tears* on *Abner’s* Grave.
Joab to rend his Cloaths, he did command,
 And at the Grave, begirt with Sackcloth, stand.
 After the Bier himself in Mourning went,
 And, in an *Elegie*, his Grief did vent,
 The People join their Tears ; o’er *Abner* weep,
 And, for his Death, a solemn Mourning keep.

C H A P. VI.

TOO late did *Ishboseth* his Error find,
 In having alienated *Abner’s* Mind,
 From his Affairs: too late did he repent
 His hasty Rashness, when he saw the Event.

’Twas not without good Cause, that Nature set
 A *double Guard* before the Tongue: and yet
 That nimble Member (it’s too often found)
 Nor *Lips*, nor *Teeth* can keep within its bound:
 But out it breaks. *A few unwary Words*
More Mischief do, than twice as many Swords.
Saul’s inconfid’rate Son, ’tis like, ne’er thought
 His *Taunt* would such a dire Effect have wrought.
 But *Martial* Spirits no *Affront* can brook,
 That on their *Honour*, like a *Stain* doth look.

And

And therefore even Kings themselves had need,
How they their Subjects disoblige, take heed.

When *Fame* had sounded *Abner's* hasty Death
Into the Ears of drooping *Ish-bosheth*,
A Trembling seiz'd him, and his Spirits fail ;
His Hands grew feeble, and his Face grew pale :
And he, though yet no Danger did appear,
Himself abandon'd to unmanly Fear.
This abject Mind made some neglect him more,
Who did not over-value him before.

Two Sons of *Rimmon* (the *Beerotbite*,
The Off-spring of the wily *Gibeonite*)
Were under *Ish-bosheth*, in some Command :
Each was, perhaps, the Captain of a Band.
These, by some Means, Intelligence had got,
That *Israel's* Princes a *Revolt* did plot,
And hoping to advance their Fortunes higher,
For *David*, did against their Lord conspire.

Their Prince into his Chamber had retir'd,
As there, at Noon, the sultry Clime' requir'd :
And, being both with *Heat* and *Grief* oppress'd,
Had thrown himself upon his Bed to rest.
The resolute *Assassines* thither came
(One *Baanab* stil'd, *Rechab* the other's Name.)
Poor *Ish-bosheth*, asleep supinely lay ;
Him, on his Bed, the Traitors basely slay.
Then, from his bleeding Corps, his Head they take ;
And, thro' the Plain, with Speed for *Hebron* make.

Arriv'd, to *David* forthwith they address:
 And, in such Terms as these, themselves express.
Behold, Great Prince, the Head of Ish-bosheth,
The Son of Saul, thy Foe, who sought thy Death.
 And instantly the mangled Head they shew'd,
 A ghastly Sight, in purple Gore imbru'd!
 The Sight struck *Horror* in the Standers by:
 But *Indignation* flam'd in *David's* Eye.
 He paus'd: then with a *Tone* that made them quake;
 To this Effect he to the *Traytors* spake.

‘ *As the Lord lives who bath my Soul*, said he,
 ‘ *Redeemed out of all Adversity*;
 ‘ *When one to Ziklag came, and Tidings brought*
 ‘ *That Saul was dead* (who, for his Tidings thought,
 ‘ He, at my Hand, a good Reward should gain)
 ‘ *I caus'd him to be seized on, and slain.*
 ‘ How much more then, when wicked Men have shed
 ‘ A Righteous Person's Blood, upon his Bed,
 ‘ In his own House: Shall I not now require
 ‘ Of you his Blood; and make your Death your Hire?’

This said, at his Command, his ready Guard,
 The Treason, with the Traitors Death, reward.
 Their *Hands* and *Feet* cut off, upon a Spear
 Were hang'd in publick, to make others fear.
 This Justice done to *Ish-bosheth*, his Head
 In *Abner's* Sepulchre was buried.

The *Israelitish* Elders, who before
 To *David* did incline; do now much more.

Their

Their Way is open'd by th' untimely Death
Of their own King, unhappy *Ishbosheth*.
Their Journey therefore they to *Hebron* take,
And to this Purpose unto *David* spake.

*Behold, Great Prince, thy Bone and Flesh are we ;
And e'en while Saul was King, yet Thou wast he
That led us out, and brought us in again :
Be pleas'd therefore over us to Reign.
For God hath said, Thou shalt my People feed :
And be a Captain over Isr'el's Seed.*

Their Message *David*, with Majestick Grace,
Receiv'd ; and all the Elders did embrace.
A solemn League before the Lord they make :
That he not them, nor they should him forsake.
Then forth the *consecrated Oyl* they bring,
And over *Israel* Anoint him King.
All Hearts are glad. Joy reigns in ev'ry Eye :
Which Shouts, and publick Triumphs testify.
The vocal Nymph the News to Fame reports,
Whose Trumpet sounds it into Foreign Courts.

When the *Solemnities* were at an End,
Which on the *Coronation* did attend,
And all Things settled ; the twice Crowned King
A royal Army to the Field did bring :
Wherewith th' insulting *Jebusites* he beat ;
And made *Jerusalem* his royal Seat :
The *Philistines* he smote, who were so bold,
To come and brave him, even in his Hold.

The *Moabites* he fully did subdue.
And mighty *Hadadezer* overthrew.
The *Edomites* he tributary made.
And *Syria* having smarted, was afraid.
Abusive *Ammon* he chastiz'd, and tam'd :
And, for his Prowess, through the East was fam'd.

And yet not more for that, than for his Love,
To *Jonathan*, which did itself approve
Long after *Jonathan*, unhappy Prince,
In Battle fell; not for his own Offence,
But for his Father's. *Friendship that is brave*
Doth Death survive; and lives beyond the Grave.

David, now having got a little Rest,
Bethinks him how his Love may be exprest
To *Jonathan*, his dear deceased Friend,
In his Posterity : And, to that End,
Enquires, if any yet remain'd of all
Descended from the Family of *Saul*,
To whom he, for the sake of *Jonathan*,
Might Kindness shew. They call to mind a Man
Whose Name was *Ziba*: Him they seek and bring,
To Court; and straitway he inform'd the King,
That *Jonathan* had yet a Son, by Name
Mephibosheth, who of his Feet was lame.
For he, poor Child, when Tidings came that *Saul*
And *Jonathan* were slain, receiv'd a Fall
Out of his Nurses Arms; when, in the Fright,
She sought to save him by too hasty Flight.

By

By which *Disaster* he, alas ! became
A Cripple ever ; both his Feet were lame.

Him *David* sent for ; and, with special Grace
Receiving, did at his own Table place :
Assuring him, he, for his Father's sake,
Like Care of him, as of his own would take.
Then all his Grandfather's and Father's Lands
Restoring to him : *Ziba* he commands
To take the Charge thereof ; the Land to till,
And make the best o't, to his utmost Skill ;
And bring the *Profits* to his Master's Son,
That he, in handsome Port might live thereon.

Mephibosheth, with Kindness overcome,
Tho' lame in Feet, was neither rude, nor dumb :
But, both by *Gesture*, and *Expression*, shew'd
The highest Marks of humble *Gratitude*.

C H A P. VII.

THE highest Pitch of Honour now attain'd
By *David*, and the Sov'reign Power gain'd:
Thrice had the consecrating Oyl been shed,
In solemn wise, on his Majestick Head.
His Temples cinctur'd with a double Crown,
The House of *Saul*, his *Rival*, quite brought down:
His *Enemies* of him did stand in awe.
And to his *Neighbours* round he gave the Law.

His *Arms* brought *Conquest* home. His very Name
 Struck *Terror*, where his Armies never came.
 Secure he fate, upon his awful Throne :
 By *others* fear'd : Beloved by his *own*.
 All Things, to make him happy, did conspire.
 In want of nothing Reason could desire.

But how *unsafe* is *Greatness* ! Ah, how nigh
 Unto *Prosperity* doth *Danger* lye !
 Beguiling *Pleasures* do, on *Greatness* wait,
 And Vice still lurking lies at *Pleasure's* Gate.
 If in it slips (And hard it is, I doubt
 Where *Pleasures* have free Course, to keep it out)
Virtue it doth insensibly destroy,
 And brings forth *treble Grief* for *single Joy*.
 This *David* found : and e're he was aware,
 Was taken and betray'd in *Pleasure's* Snare:

It came to pass, one Evening, when the Heat
 Abated was (which, in that Clime, was great)
 That *David* from his easful Bed arose ;
 And to his Palace Roof for Air he goes.
 There walking too and fro, his wandring Eye
 A naked Woman, *batbing*, did espy.

The Sight surpriz'd him. Yet he *Pleasure* took,
 On that attractive Object still to look :
 For scarcely had he seen so fine a Creature,
 For Shape, Complection, and for lovely Feature.

Poor *David's* Nature now set all on Fire,
His Breast enflaming with undue Desire.
He look'd and burnt: He burnt and look'd again,
Nor Power had from looking to refrain.
His *Eyes* betray'd his *Heart*. Now yield he must
Himself a *Captive* to unruly *Lust*.

Ah! How unsafe it is to let the Eye
Into the Privacies of Women pry!
How dangerous to let the *Devil* catch
The Mind a *roving*, from its inward Watch!
David was guarded strong enough, no doubt,
To hinder any *Mischief* from *without*.
But *he that will secured be from Sin*
Must keep a strict, and constant Guard within.

Now all his *Thoughts* poor *David* doth employ,
The Party how to find, and to enjoy.
He makes Inquiry; and doth quickly find
One, that knew both the Woman, and his Mind.
By him he understood, the *beaute'us* Dame
Was *Ammiel's* Daughter: *Bath-sheba* her Name.
And that she was the brave *Uriab's* Wife,
(*Uriab* lov'd her as he lov'd his Life)
This known, the King, impatient of Delay,
Sends Messengers: The Woman they *betray*,
And bring her to him. She by him conceives.
And then, returning home, the Palace leaves.

How miserable is that Prince's State,
On whom a Sett of *Parasites* do wait!

How

How sad is his Condition who must trust
 Such, as will *pandar* to his lawless *Lust* !
 Had they, whom *David* sent the Dame to bring,
 Been worthy of a Place about a King ;
 They would have run the *Hazard* of his *Blame*,
 To save their Master from so *foul* a Shame.
 They would have represented to his View
 That *od'us Evil* in its *proper* Hew.
 They would have try'd all Means ; have *strove*, have
 And, rather than have acted, *disobey'd*. [*pray'd* :
 But ah ! such faithful Courtiers are as rare,
 As Crows in Streams, or Fishes in the Air.

No Help from his had *David*. They he sent
 Were in so *bad* a Work, *too* diligent.
 He spake the Word, they ran ; their Errand tell :
 Prevail, the Woman bring ; *by her be fell*.
 He fell, who had such high Attainments known,
 To whom such *special* Favours God had shown.
 He who so late before the Ark did dance,
 Now could not stand against a Woman's Glance.
 Surpriz'd by a Temptation, down he fell ;
 Who the *sweet Singer* was of *Israel*.
 He, from the holy Path, aside did start ;
 Who, *once*, a Man was after God's own Heart.

Ah ! who can hope, when such Mental, to stand
 Without an eminent supporting Hand !
 Our *Life's a War* : *Temptations all assail* :
 And, without *strong Resistance*, will prevail.

Not

Not Kings, we see, can stand ; however good
They are, when once they *yield to Flesh and Blood.*

After fair *Bath-sheba* had been at home
Time long enough to know ; her fruitful Womb
(By which she was not apt to be beguil'd)
Gave her Assurance, that *she was with Child.*
Forthwith she *private* Notice thereof sent
To *David* ; *publick* Scandal to prevent.
This put poor *David* to his *Shifts* to find
How he the *Husband*, and the *World* might blind.

C H A P. VIII.

MEAN while *Uriah* from his Home had been,
Seeking, immortal Fame, by Arms to win.
Him *David* straitway sent for home, that he
A *Cloke* to their *Adultery* might be :
Unthinking that he then must be too late,
To cover an Amour of such a Date.

No sooner good *Uriah* did receive
The King's Command: but forthwith taking leave
Of *Joab*, to the *Court* his Course he bent ;
And to his *Sovereign* did himself present.
The *King* enquires : *Uriah* doth relate
Both *Joab's* Welfare, and the *Armie's* State.

When he had made an End, and Night came on,
The King (impatient till he saw him gone)

Dismiss

Dismiss him ; and advis'd him haste to make
Down to his House : and there *Refreshment* take.

Then from his Presence forth *Uriah* went ;
And after him a *Royal Mess* was sent ;
The King concluding he would home repair,
Himself to solace with his (*faulty*) Fair.

No farther went *Uriah* than the Gate
Of *David's* House, where Servants us'd to wait ;
With whom, his old Acquaintance, he consorts,
And unto them the War's Success reports.
When Bed-time came, amongst the *Guards* he kept,
And Soldier-like, amongst the Soldiers slept.

Troubled was *David*, when he heard, by some,
Next Morn, *Uriah* had not been at home.
Yet hiding, what he could, his Discontent,
He for *Uriah* to his Presence, sent :
And with a *seeming Pity*, when he came,
Him, in such Words as these, did gently blame.

‘ What was the Matter, *over-bardy* Knight,
‘ Thou went'st not down unto thy House last Night?
‘ Cam'st thou not from thy Journey, tyr'd and spent?
‘ Why art thou of thyself so negligent ?
‘ I thought thou might'st have born a *Bed* less hard,
‘ Than are the *Matted Benches* of my Guard.
‘ I Therefore sent thee home, to take thy Rest,
‘ Where I suppos'd, thou might enjoy it best.

‘ Hereafter

‘ Hereafter of thyself more careful be.

‘ Thou thinks not what thy Loss would be to me.’

With humble Thanks, *Uriah* thus reply’d,
Isr’el and *Judab*, with the *Ark* abide
In Tents: Lord *Joab* lyeth, with his Men,
In *open Fields encamped*. Shall I then
Go to my House to eat, and merry make,
And Pleasure in my Wife’s Embraces take!
The Lord forbid! As lives thy Soul, O King,
I will not be perswaded to this Thing.
I shun whatever *Courage* would abate:
Soft Pleasures do the Mind effeminate.

Thus spake *Uriah*. And let none suppose
It drop’d by chance; or from a Soldier rose:
But *beedfully* observe it, with an Eye,
That can through Words, a *Providence* descry.
For God was hedging *David’s* Way about;
That *David’s* Guilt might, to his *Shame*, break out.

When *David* had *Uriah’s* Answer weigh’d,
He plainly saw, unless he were *betray’d*,
He never should by him effect the End,
For which he for him, from the Camp, did send.
New Measures therefore *David* now doth take.
Contrives how he *Uriah* drunk may make.
Looks on him with a more familiar Face;
And now receives him into special Grace.
So seems he in *Uriah* to delight,
As if he were the only Favourite.

His *feigned* Kindness quickly grew so great,
 That now *Uriah* must with *David* Eat.
 He makes him Drink, and Drink, and Drink again ;
 'Till, with rich Wines, he *overcharg'd* his Brain.
 Thus *Sin* to *Sin*, thus *Guilt* he adds to *Guilt* :
 Nor stops until *Uriah's* Blood be spilt.
 Thus the *allow'd* Commission of a Sin,
 Not seldom serves to let another in.

Uriah now is *Drunk* ; the grapy Juice
 Hath of his Reason robb'd him of the Use:
 With *sprightly* Wine *inflam'd*, who would have
 thought
 But he, his Wife's *Embraces* would have fought ?
 Yet neither *Drunk* nor *Sober*, could he be
 Perswaded, either House, or Wife, to see.
 But with the *Guards* at Night again he lay ;
 And snoring slept his Drunkenness away,

The King now hopeless, and enrag'd to think
 That neither by his *Flattery*, nor *Drink*
 He could his End obtain ; and harder grown
 (*For Sin, repeated, hardens any one*)
 Resolves, at last, a *desp'rate* Course to try ;
 And *Murder* join unto *Adultery*.
 No Way to save his Honour, did remain,
 He thought, unless he got *Uriah* slain.
 For since he found that, not by any Wile,
 He the *resolved* *Uriah* could beguile :

He

He saw that, if he suffer'd him to live,
He never would the *Injury* forgive :
But, if not seek *Revenge*, at least proclaim
The *Wrong* he suffer'd ; and his Prince's *Shame*.
Thus reason'd *David*: on this Policy
The King concludes, *Uriah* needs must die.
He, that had suffer'd *too much Wrong* before,
Lest that discover'd be, must suffer *more*.
Uriah's guiltless Blood must now be spilt,
To make a Covering for *David's Guilt*.
But Oh ! the *Guilt* of *guiltless* Blood, thus shed,
Will fall, with *treble Weight* on *David's Head*.
Ah ! What is Man, the best of Men, when left
Unto himself, of Grace divine bereft !

To *Joab*, *David* doth a Letter write,
Commanding him that in the hottest Fight ;
He *should Uriah*, in the Fore-front, place :
And, when he is engag'd, retire a-pace ;
Leaving him *single* in the open Plain,
That, by the Enemy, he may be slain.

The Letter which contain'd this dire Command,
Is sent to *Joab*, by *Uriah's* Hand.
Uriah, void of Jealousy and Fear,
The fatal Letter doth to *Joab* bear.
Of his own Death the *Instrument* he's made.
How easily is Innocence betray'd !
So went *Bellephoron* : whose milder Fate
Did unto him prove more propitiate.

When

When *Joab* understood his Master's Mind,
 He to *Uriah* such a Place assign'd,
 Where, by Experience, he before had found
 Were *valiant* Men, that would defend their Ground.
 Then *falling back*, there left him to maintain
 The Fight *alone*: So was *Uriah* slain.

Thus the brave *Hittite*, by a Plot fore-laid,
Valiantly Fighting, *basely* was betray'd.
 The first, perhaps, that ever lost his Life,
 For not Embracing his most beauteous Wife.

With speed *Uriah's* Death is signify'd
 To *David*, who his Joy could hardly hide.
Uriah's Widow, when she heard the News,
 Put on the Mourning Weeds that Widows use,
 And mourn'd the Time. Then *David* took the Dame
 Home to his House: and she his Wife became.
 Nor was it long before she bore a Son.
 But *God was sore displeas'd with what was done.*

C H A P. IX.

NOW all was hush'd and still. *Uriah* dead.
 His Wife translated to King *David's* Bed.
 No more by *stealth*: but now with *open Face*,
 The joyful King doth *Bathsheba* embrace.
 Before his Courtiers doth her Court, and Kifs;
 And without Blushing, dares to call her *his*.
Uriah's Blood th' *Adult'ry* out did blot.
 And how that *Blood* was shed is now forgot.
Dissolv'd

Diffolv'd in *melting Pleasures David* lies,
 And from th' *Avenger*, in himself, he flies.
Remorse was lost. *Hardness* was enter'd in,
Sensual Delights had drown'd the *Sense of Sin*.

But *David's God* (the *God* who *David* chose,
 And *David* lov'd) would not his *David* lose.
 For though a *strong Temptation* had prevail'd,
 And *David*, sway'd thereby, had grossly fail'd:
 Yet he, who *Hearts* doth search, and *Reins* doth try,
 Saw yet in *David* a *Sincerity*.
 His *Prophet* therefore *God* did send, to rouse
 The *stupid King*, from his *lethargick Drowse*.

O boundless Goodness! O unmeasur'd Love!
 Which did the *Bowels* of the *Father* move
 Towards his *erring Child*. He condescends:
 And the *first Motion* makes, for being *Friends*.
 Th' *Offended* uses Means, to raise a *Sense*
 In the *Offender*, of his foul *Offence*:
 That, on *Repentance*, he may *Mercy* show;
 And *Reconciliation* thence may flow.

Th' inspired *Prophet*, thus to *David* sent,
 Did, by a *harmless Wile*, him circumvent:
 And, having in a *Parable* him caught,
 The *King* to be his own *Condemner* brought.

' Two Men, said he, did in one City dwell:
 ' One very Poor, and One in Wealth did swell;
 I The

‘ The Rich, of Flocks and Herds had plenteous Store;
 ‘ The Poor Man had, in all the World, no more
 ‘ But one small *Ew-Lamb*; which he bought, & fed,
 ‘ And choicely, with his Children, nourished.
 ‘ Of his own Cup it drank : and for its Meat,
 ‘ He grudg’d it not the same himself did eat.
 ‘ He let it in his *Bosom* lye at Night :
 ‘ For, as a Daughter, ’twas his chief Delight.
 ‘ Now when a *Stranger* to the Rich Man came
 ‘ To visit him ; so void was he of Shame,
 ‘ That sparing all his own, he took and drest
 ‘ The *Poor Man’s Lamb*, to entertain his Guest.’

With strict *Attention* did King *David* hear
 The Prophet’s Tale. Then made it soon appear,
 How *quick* his Sense was of the *poor Man’s Wrong*:
 And what to th’ *rich Oppressor* did belong.
 Against the Man his *hot Displeasure* brake,
 And to the Prophet *Nathan*, thus he spake.

‘ As lives the Lord, let him be ne’er so high,
 ‘ The Man, that this hath done, *shall surely die*.
 ‘ Nay, Death shall not suffice, but furthermore,
 ‘ He *four Times* over shall the *Lamb* restore :
 ‘ Because that, having *Plenty* of his own,
 ‘ He did this Thing, and hath *no Pity* shown.’
 So spake the King. But little thought, alas !
 That he this Sentence *on himself* did pass.

How *partial* is the Nature of Mankind !
Quick sighted at another’s Fault : but *blind*

Unto

Unto our own! *Ourselves* how apt to spare,
But unto *others* how *severe* we are!
He that could, with an over-hasty Breath,
For a less Fault, pronounce another's Death:
Could just before abuse his Neighbour's Wife;
And him, without Remorse, deprive of Life.

No sooner did the heavy Sentence come
From *David's* Lips, but *Nathan* set it home.
Disguises lay'd aside, the Seer began:
My Message is to thee—*Thou art the Man!*

How great was now the guilty King's Surprize!
Might have been seen in his *dejected* Eyes:
His *conscious* Blood into his Face did flush,
And brought upon his Cheeks a *scarlet* Blush:
Which lasted not, but in a while did fail;
And was succeeded by a *faint* Pale.
As if the guiltless *Blood* he lately spilt,
Had thither flow'd, to evidence his *Guilt*.
And then retiring, back again had fled,
To shew the stained Ground, where it was shed.
A great Disorder in his Face appear'd;
As well from what he *felt*, as what he *fear'd*;
His Hands, like one that had the *Palsy*, shook:
His *trembling* Knees against each other strook.
Silent he sat; his Spirit almost gone:
While the inspired *Prophet* thus went on.

‘ Thus saith the Lord, the God of *Israel*,
‘ (Who in most *awful* Majesty doth dwell)

‘ I over *Israel* thee appointed King ;
‘ And out of all thy Troubles thee did bring.
‘ Out of the Hand of *Saul* I thee did save :
‘ And unto thee thy *Master’s* House I gave.
‘ Into thine Arms thy *Master’s* Wives I cast :
‘ And to thee *Isr’el* made, and *Judah*, fast :
‘ And if all this had been too small a Store,
‘ I would have added such and such things more.
‘ Why then didst thou the Lord’s Command despise,
‘ To do the Thing that’s *evil* in his Eyes ?
‘ *Uriab* thou, with *Amnon’s* Sword, hast slain :
‘ And with his Wife as with thine own, has lain.
‘ Now therefore, never shall thy House be free
‘ From *Sword* : because thou hast despised me ;
‘ (Who from the Sheep-cote, set thee on the Throne)
‘ And took *Uriab’s* Wife to be thine own.

‘ Thus saith the Lord, behold, I’ll Evil raise,
‘ Out of thy House, against thee, divers Ways.
‘ Thy *Wives*, before thine Eyes, I’ll from thee take ;
‘ And let thy Neighbour *Strumpets* of them make.
‘ He with thy Wives in open View, shall lye :
‘ Regardless who looks on, or who stands by.
‘ Thou *secretly* hast wrought, and in the *Dark* :
‘ But I will on thee set a *publick* Mark.
‘ For I will cause this *Justice* to be done
‘ Before all *Israel*, and before the *Sun*.’

This said, the Prophet stop’d. The wounded King,
(Who of his Guilt now felt the *piercing* Sting)
Defence

Defence had none to make : No Art did use,
 His foul Offence to *palliate*, or *excuse*.
 But fetching, from his very *inmost* Part,
 A *doleful* Groan, which seem'd to *rend* his Heart ;
 His *quiv'ring* Lips let fall this *mournful* Word,
Ab ME ! I sinned have against the Lord.
 A *Sigh* the Sentence clos'd ; a *Sigh* that came
 So *warmly* out, it might his Lips *inflamm* :
 But that his *melting* Eyes a plenteous *Show'r*
 Of *Tears*, upon his *Cheeks* and *Beard* did pour.

Short the *Confession* was. Yet that it flow'd
 From a *true* Penitent, the *Accent* show'd.
 It reach'd the Prophet's Heart, and gain'd Belief
 Of the *Sincerity* of *David's* Grief.
 For God *Repentance*, if it be *sincere*,
 Accepts, though *short*, in Words, it doth appear.

Such *David's* was : yet was it not in vain.
 The gladdened Prophet alters now his Strain ;
 And with an *healing* Word, doth thus begin :
 ' *The Lord hath also put away thy Sin ;*
 ' *Thou shalt not die.* O, who would be so base,
 To sin against such undeserved Grace !
 ' Howbeit (thus the Prophet did proceed)
 ' Because thou great Occasion, by this Deed,
 ' Hast given wicked Men, the Lord to scorn ;
 ' The Spurious-Child, which unto thee is born,
 ' Shall surely die.' His Word was verifi'd :
 For, on the seventh Day, the *Infant* dy'd.

The *Prophet* now, his Message fully done,
 Had left the *King* ; and to his House was gone.
 But what he, from the Lord, had to him said,
 On *David's* Heart a deep *Impression* made.
 His *Conscience*, which before did *stumb'ring* lye,
 Now, throughly waken'd, in his *Face* did fly,
 And charg'd him home. He felt the *Wounds* within,
 Which, on his *bleeding* Heart, were made by *Sin*.

Ah ! Who his *grinding* Sorrows can exprefs !
 Or speak the Hundreth Part of his Distress !
 His *galling* Grief, his *Pity-moving* Moans,
 His *deep-fetch'd* Sighs, and his *Heart-rending* Groans !
 Himself, we find, could not deliver these,
 Without the help of great *Hyperboles*.

How *earnest* was he ! With what *Fervency*,
 Unto his God, did he for *Pardon* cry !
 ‘ Have Mercy on me, O my God, he cry’d :
 ‘ And for my *Sins* thy Face, not from me, hide.
 ‘ Purge me with *Hyssop*, cleanse me from my Sin :
 ‘ And wash me throughly, from all *Guilt*, within.
 ‘ Create in me a *clean* Heart, and *renew*
 ‘ Within me, Lord, a Spirit *right* and *true*.
 ‘ O from thy Presence cast me not away :
 ‘ Nor take thy Spirit from me, Lord, I pray.
 ‘ With thy free Spirit me uphold. Restore
 ‘ The Joy of thy Salvation, as before.’

Such *moving* Supplications Day and Night,
 Did he pour forth ; which I nor can recite,

Nor

Nor need : for he hath couch'd them in such *Verse*,
As my *short-winded* Muse cannot rehearse.
Suffice it therefore, that the Reader know,
He did *not Pray in vain* : but prayed so,
That he not only *Pardon* did obtain ;
But his lost Favour did with God regain.
God grant, whoever sins like him, may be
As true a contrite Penitent, as He.

The End of the THIRD BOOK.

DAVIDES.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

TH^{O'} the sharp Sentence, which, in too
 great haste,
 Th' unwitting King upon himself had plac'd,
 Was mitigated by the Clemency
 Of *David's* God ; that *David* might not die :
 Yet did the Prophet, in God's Name, declare,
 That he would *Evil* against him *prepare* ;
 Which should in his *own Family* arise,
 And on him bring the forest Exercise.

This was the Doom, tho' more at large exprest,
 By which poor *David* was to be distressed.
 Which (though *protracted*, yet) would certain be :
 For *who can alter a divine Decree* ?
 Judgments denounc'd may *linger* : But at length,
 They fall *more heavy*, and with *greater Strength*.

Sometimes

Sometimes the Stroke doth at a *Distance* stand :
 Yet that which brings it on is near at Hand.
 So, in this Case, some Years did intervene,
 Betwixt the *Sentence*, and the Tragick *Scene*.
 Yet that which led thereto did *closely* lurk ;
 And, in short time, did thus bring on the Work.

Of all the many Sons which *David* had,
Amnon the Eldest was ; a *topping* Lad,
 Who of the *Jezreelite*, *Abinoam*,
 Was born, soon after she to *Hebron* came.
 A Daughter also *David* had, whose Name,
 Was *Tamar* ; a most beautiful young Dame,
 Sister she was to *Absalom* the Fair,
David's Third Son ; so noted for his Hair.

On this Half Sister-Princes, *Amnon* cast
 A wanton Eye. Affection grew so fast
 Upon him, that, not daring to discover
 For *Shame*, or *Fear*, what an *unlawful* Lover
 He was ; he pin'd away, his *Cheeks* grew pale,
 His *Flesh* did waste, his *Strength* began to fail.
 The *fery Passion*, in his Bosom pent,
 Did *inward* burn, for want of *outward* Vent.

A Friend he had, who unto him was near
 Of Kin ; a Friend peculiarly dear :
 His Father's Brother's Son, nam'd *Jonadab*,
 Quickfighted, and *too wise to be a Blab*.

He, well observing how, from Day to Day,
 His Princely Kinsman pin'd and fell away :

For

For which since he no outward Cause could find,
Concluded something did afflict his Mind.
Wherefore, a proper Season having got,
He put the Question close: enquiring what
It was, that on his Nature did prevail,
So as to make his *Countenance* look pale,
And *Flesh* decay. Imploring not to hide
Ought from his Friend; in whom he might confide.

Prince *Amnon*, by his Friend thus closely prest,
His Love, tho' not without a *Blush*, confess,
The Princess *Tamar* 'tis, said he, I love,
Oh, that my Love should so *Eccentrick* move!
I love my own *Half-Sister*, who did spring
From the same Root, as I my self, the King.
I love, ah me! I love; yet love in vain;
Hopeless the Object of my Love to gain.
This is my Case. The Heat of my Desire
Consumes my Nature: sets me all on Fire.

When *Jonadab* (than whom no Man alive
Knew better how a *Mischief* to contrive)
Had heard the Case; he soon discover'd what
Would *Amnon* please: And thus he laid the Plot.

Go, take thy Bed, said he, and (for a Trick)
Put on thy Night-Cap. Feign that thou art sick.
And when thy Father comes to see thee, say
Give leave, I pray, my Sister *Tamar* may
Come to me; and before me dress some Meat:
'That, seeing her prepare it, I may eat.

He

He went no farther. For, he knew, the Prince
Was quick enough, to understand his Sense.
And if he could but draw the long'd for Dame
Within his Reach, knew how to quench his Flame.

Amnon, the Counsel liking, forthwith took
His Bed upon it; and, with *puling* Look,
Dissembled Sickness. Quickly the Report
Of *Amnon's* Illness reach'd the royal Court.

The King in haste, to *Amnon* doth repair,
To see his ailing Son, the Kingdom's Heir.
This gave fair room for *Amnon* to request,
He might Eat something by his Sister dress'd.
The King consents: and doth his Mind declare,
That *Tamar* should to *Amnon's* House repair;
And there, by his Direction, dress such Meat
For him, as he, *poor Heart*! could like to eat.

The Princess *Tamar* did no sooner hear
Her Father's Order, but, with filial Fear,
And nimble Steps, she to her Brother hies,
Who, on his Bed, dissembling Sickness, lies.
She ask'd him how he did: And did bemoan
His Danger. But *more justly might her own*.
The courteous *Mein*, fresh *Beauty* of the Dame,
Did more and more the *Lecher's* Lust inflame.
She ask'd him what he'd please to have her make
For him to eat: He pitch'd upon a *Cake*.
She to the Work address'd herself with haste;
Temper'd the *Flour*, and wrought it into *Paste*.

Her

Her Milk-white Hands, and slender Fingers frame
 The pliant Paste, till it a *Cake* became.
 Then having bak'd it also at his Fire,
 (Each Turn and Motion height'ning his Desire)
 She brought it to him. But he put it by :
 His Room was overfill'd with Company.
 But Order given that it clear'd should be,
 And none left in it, but himself and she,
 He then requested, that she would draw near,
 And bring the Mess. She did so, without Fear.
 But when, alas ! within his Reach she came,
 He laid fast hold upon the lovely Dame :
 Then taking her about the Neck, he kist her,
 And bluntly said, Come, *Lye with me*, my Sister.

Surpriz'd, the Damsel *trembled*; and would fain
 Have from him got : She strove, but strove in *vain*;
 He held her fast. She then began to plead ;
 And, for her *Honour*, thus did intercede.

‘ Oh ! *Force me not*, my Brother ! I intreat
 ‘ Thee to consider, that the Sin is great.
 ‘ *Great*, in itself : *Greater*, in thee to me ;
 ‘ So nearly link'd by *Consanguinity*.
 ‘ Forbear, I pray, forbear : Thy Lust restrain.
 ‘ Thy Honour, mine, our Father's, do not stain
 ‘ With such an Infamy. Thou know'st full well,
 ‘ No such thing may be born in *Israel*.
 ‘ Should'st thou *defile* me : Where could I abide !
 ‘ Where find an Hole ? my *shamed* Head to hide !

Thou

- 'Thou too, the Heir of our great Father's Crown,
 'Born to the Kingdom, bred in high Renown.
 'Thy Father's *Darling*, and the Peoples Joy :
 'What will become of thee, if thou destroy
 'Their Hopes, by perpetrating such a Crime
 'As this? Well might thou thenceforth curse the
 Time
 'Thou e'er saw *Tamar* : For thou then (ah me !)
 'But as a *Fool* in Israel would'ft be.
 'Regard thine Honour, *mine*, our Family :
 'And rob me not of my Virginity.
 'Force me not, Brother, *force me not* : But rather
 'Ask me in Marriage of our Royal Father.
 'He to bestow me on thee will not fail.
 'O let my *Pray'rs* and *Tears* with thee prevail !'

This said, she, with her *Tears*, bedew'd his Face;
 But he, whom Lust had quite bereft of Grace,
 Her most *importune* Prayers would not hear :
 But to her Supplications stop'd his Ear :
 And, being stronger, did by Force *deflow'r*
 The Princely Dame ; resisting, to her Pow'r.

Great is the Diff'rence betwixt *lawful Love*,
 And *lawless Lust*. That doth itself approve,
 By its Effects, to be indeed *divine*,
 As having a Cœlestial Origin.
 That constant is ; and by Injoyment grows
 Still stronger : which its *innate* Virtue shows.

But

But *t'other*, (which is *miscall'd* Love, and must
If rightly nam'd, be stiled *filthy Lust*)
From sensual Concupiscence doth flow :
Which shews its Parentage is from *below*.
This likes to take a Taste of ev'ry one,
Dally with all : but constant be to none.
And *this*, how hot soever it doth burn :
After Injoyment, can to *Hatred* turn.

Such Love was *Amnon's* : whose *uncurb'd* Desire,
After his Sister, set him all on Fire.
He burn'd, he flam'd, consum'd, and needs would
Unless he might with his own Sister lye. [dye :
Yet, when he once his *brutish* End had gain'd ;
And, by a Rape, his Sister's Honour stain'd :
He, in a Moment, chang'd his amorous Theam,
And flew as high in th' opposite Extream.
He, who but now was *over hot* and bold,
Is now become to her *exceeding cold*.
He, that in nothing else could take Delight,
But her fair Face, now loaths and shuns the Sight.
She, who *before* his Heart did captivate,
Is now become the Object of his Hate.
He *bates* her now. He *bates* her now much more,
With perfect *Hatred*, than he *lov'd* before.
He *bates* her so, he can't her Presence bear :
But every Hour she stays, he thinks a Year.
That nothing might, to shew his Hate, be lacking;
He rudely bids her, up ; away, be packing.

This

This surly Carriage added to the Grief
 She had before. Nor knew she where Relief,
 Opprest, to find. She told him, On her Part
 There was no Cause he thus should break her Heart.
 Wish'd him to weigh, whether this would not bring
 Greater Displeasure on him from the King.

He the deaf Ear, to all she said, did turn ;
 And churlishly did at her Counsel spurn.
 Then call'd his Man, and sternly bid him put
 That Woman out : and fast the Door to shut.
 He did so. She, poor Princess, did lament
 The *double* Injury. Forthwith she rent
 Her royal Robe (of divers Colours made,
 With which Kings Virgin-Daughters were array'd)
 The lovely Tresses of her well-set Hair,
 Her trembling Fingers, through deep Sorrow, tare,
 Then putting *Ashes* on her Head, she laid
 Her Hand thereon, and mournful Accents made ;
 While to her Brother *Absalom's* she went,
 Where she, more freely, might her Case lament.

As soon as *Absalom* the ravish'd Dame
 Did see (well knowing also whence she came)
 He strait suspecting what had her beset ;
 Begg'd of her, that she would not stick to tell
 Him, how 'twas with her : Whether *Amnon* had
Abus'd her ; and from thence she was so sad.
 She *blushing*, rather to acknowledge chose,
 Her *Wrong* by *Looks* ; than *Shame* by *Words* disclose.
 He

He understood her. And considering
How dear Prince *Amnon* was unto the King ;
How high, in Favour of the Court and Town,
He stood, as *Heir* apparent to the Crown :
Concluded in himself, 'twould be but vain
To hope for *Justice*, if she should Complain :
Therefore he wish'd his Sister to conceal
The Wrong sustained, until he could deal
With *Amnon* for it. She submits to wait ;
And liv'd with him : but much disconsolate.

Abfalom's Guess was right, that 'twould be vain
For *Tamar*, of Prince *Amnon* to complain
Unto the King : for, though he very wroth
Is said to be ; yet was he no less loth
(When to his Ear this foul Transgression came)
To lay on *Amnon* Punishment or Shame.

But *Abfalom* did bear the Thing in mind ;
And in due Time to be reveng'd, design'd.
For, in his Heart, he could not choose but *bate*
The Man that durst his Sister *violate*,
How near, or high soever. Such a Stain
Will hardly be got out, till he is slain
That gave it. Therefore *Abfalom* is set
Amnon to kill, when he fit Time can get.

C H A P. II.

TWICE had the restless, and unweari'd Sun
His Yearly Course, throughout the *Zodiack*
run,

E're *Absalom* a Season fit could find,
To execute the Vengeance he design'd
On *Amnon*, for the Wickedness he wrought,
In the Dishonour he on *Tamar* brought.
But now a fit Occasion did present,
And he, to take it too, was fully bent.

A great *Sheep-shearing*, at his Country Seat,
Had *Absalom*; at which a noble *Treat*
He meant to make: and thither to invite
The King and Court; then *Amnon* there to smite.

To Court he hastens, and acquaints the King,
In humble Manner, with his Sheep-Shearing.
Intreats that he, at the set Time and Place,
His Feast would, with his Royal Presence, grace.

To suit his State, and his Retinue large,
The King consider'd, would enhance the Charge:
He pleaded this, and handsomely refus'd,
And hop'd his Son would hold the King excus'd.

It suited well; and sure he lik'd it best,
Without the King; so *Amnon* were his Guest.

K

Amnon,

Amnon, for whom the Entertainment's made,
Whom to destroy, the subtil *Train* is laid.
Yet crafty *Abfalom*, the more to hide
His bloody Purpose, still himself apply'd,
With greater Earnestness, to gain the King
To come ; and with him *all* his Sons to bring :
But all in vain. The King will not be won,
By his Intreaties, to oppress his Son.
Yet, that he might his good Acceptance show,
His *Blessing* he upon him did bestow.

Then *Abfalom*, by this imbolden'd, prest
To let his Brother *Amnon* be his Guest.
Why *Amnon* ? ask'd the King. Because, said he,
Amnon, in dignity, is *next to thee*.
The gentle King from all Suspicion free,
And overcome by Importunity,
Yields that, not *Amnon* only, but the Rest
Of the King's Sons should go at his Request.

The Point thus gain'd, now *Abfalom* doth part
From Court ; and hasts, with unrelenting Heart,
Unto his Country Seat, that he might there,
The proper Means to his Design prepare.

Then, of his Servants, calling to him such,
As, in his Cause, he knew would never grutch
Their Lives to lose : He thus the Matter breaks ;
And, in such Terms as these, his Purpose speaks.

• Mark

‘ Mark well, said he, when *Amnon*, at the Feast,
 ‘ Shall have drunk high, and overcharg’d his Breast
 ‘ With gen’rous Wine : when I say, *Amnon* smite ;
 ‘ Fall on, strike home, fear not, but kill him quite.
 ‘ Remember it is I, that give Command :
 ‘ Be valiant then, and to your Weapons stand.’

Accordingly, his Brethren being come,
 And all the Guests, to feast with *Absalom* ;
 He, that he *Amnon* might the more beguile
 (His Hatred hiding with a *feigned* Smile)
 Embrac’d, carefs’d him, and for special Grace,
 He strait preferr’d him to the chiefest Place.
 Ply’d him with sprightly Wines, till he perceiv’d
 The Wine had him of Sense well nigh bereav’d.
 Then starting up, he gave the fatal Word,
Smite Amnon. Forthwith each *Assassin*’s Sword
 Was sheathed in him : Ev’ry one let fly
 At *Amnon*, until *Amnon* dead did lye.

But oh ! the dreadful Tumult that it made
 Among the Guests ! Each held himself betray’d.
 The Royal Stock were most of all perplex’d,
 Of whom each fear’d his Turn would be the next.
 Which to prevent, all to their Mules did hie ;
 And back to Court, *Fear adding Wings*, did fly.

But tho’, with utmost Speed, they cut their Way,
 Yet *long Tongu’d* Fame made greater haste than they.
 The *babbling* Dame before them got to Court,
 And of the sad Disaster made Report.

And, as her Nature is to magnify
Th' ill News she bears (not sticking at a Lye)
She, to *exaggerate* the Crime did feign,
That *Abfalom* had all his Brothers slain ;
So that not one of them alive was left ;
But of his Sons the King, was quite bereft.

Such doleful News sufficient was to shake
The strongest Mind, and make the Heart to ake.
The King, with Garments rent, upon the Ground
Himself did cast : his Sorrows did abound.
And all his Servants, with their Garments rent,
The Loss of so much Royal Blood lament.

This *Jonadab* observing (he who gave
The Counsel, which brought *Amnon* to his Grave)
He begg'd the King not to believe that *all*
His Sons were slain : *Amnon alone* did fall.
That this, which he related, was most true,
He could assure him. For, said he, I knew,
Long since, that *Abfalom*, from the very Hour,
Wherein his Brother *Amnon* did deflow'r
His Sister *Tamar*, had his Death design'd ;
And only waited until he could find
A Season for't, which since he now did gain,
He caus'd his Brother *Amnon* to be slain.
Thereby to sacrifice, to *Tamar's* Honour,
Him that had brought so great *Reproach* upon her.

By that Time *Jonadab* his Tale had told,
(Which scarce as yet could gain Belief) behold

The

The King's Sons enter'd, in a frightful Maze,
 And on the King, as he on them, did gaze :
 'Till he and they into loud Weeping brake ;
 And, in sad Accents, mutual Sorrow, spake.

Mean while young *Abfalom*, to save his Head
 From Stroke of Justice, for *Protection* fled
 Unto his Grandfather's, King *Talmay's* Court :
 Where he might hope for *Safety* and *Support*.
 But *David* long did *Amnon's* Death bewail.
 Which yet could not *Uriah's* countervail.

This is the *Second* Instance may be giv'n,
 Of the fulfilling that Decree of Heaven,
 By God denounc'd on *David* ; when he says,
 From thy own House, against thee divers Ways,
 I'll Evil bring.—First, *Amnon* did deflow'r
 His Daughter *Tamar*, put into his Pow'r
 By him: than which, ah, what more foul Dishonour,
 Poor, harmless Princess, could have come upon her!
 What home-bred Mischief on himself could fall,
 Which could a worthy Mind more deeply gall.

This seem'd the first; and scarcely two Years after
 His Son and Heir had thus defil'd his Daughter :
 That Injury her Brother did repay,
 And in Revenge the wretched *Amnon* slay.
 Had *David* Justice upon *Amnon* done,
 He might have mended, and not lost his Son.
 This was a cutting Evil, and must need
 Strike deep ; and cause a Father's Heart to bleed.

This was the *second* Stroke, by which that Word
Was verify'd: *David* beware the Third.

C H A P. III.

NOW had Prince *Absalom* three Winters spent
At *Geshur*, whither he for *Safety* went.
When *David*, having for his *Amnon* shed
A Flood of Tears; but seeing he was dead,
His Grief subsides; and soon paternal Love,
It's Place resuming, in his Breast doth move
To *Absalom*; right Heir to *Israel's* Throne,
Now *Amnon's* dead, and *Chileab* also gone.

This *bankering* Mind *Joab's* observing Eye
Did in the King, his Uncle, soon espy.
And being glad to find it, sought a Way
How he might *Absalom* to Court convey:
Not doubting but, if he could that obtain,
The Royal Favour he would soon regain.
This to effect, a *wily Train* he laid
The King to circumvent: who, thus betray'd,
Unwittingly should Pardon *Absalom*;
And that once done, should then recall him home.

To *Tekoab* he sent, where then did dwell
A Woman, who in Wisdom did excel.
Her he instructed, when arriv'd, to dress
Herself in Mourning Weeds, then get Access

To

To *David's* Presence, and before him feign,
She mourned for a Son of hers, was slain
By his own Brother : whom the Family
Rose up against ; condemning him to die.
Then, to beseech the King her Son to save
From being buried in his Brother's Grave.

Instructed thus, she to the Court did go,
And, as a Suppliant, herself did throw
At the King's Feet. And being ask'd the Case,
Her artful Tale she told, which took such Place
In the unwary King, that thus he spake,
Go home ; and proper Care for thee I'll take.
She, glad of this, did yet her Suit renew
Once and again ; until the King she drew
To say, *thy Son for this shan't lose an Hair.*
And this he did not only say, but *sware.*

When thus the *wily* Dame the King had wrought
To grant, unwittingly the Thing she sought,
Obtaining Leave, the Matter home did bring,
And fairly did apply it to the King.
Told him, that he was that *Avenger*, whom
She fear'd, on the Behalf of *Abfalom*.
Besought him to consider that, unless
He pardon'd him, and did his People bless
With their beloved *Abfalom* : Nor he
From Danger could, nor they from Fear be free.
She begg'd that he, as *Father*, and as *King*
Would pardon *Abfalom* ; and home would bring
His

His *banished*: and him again restore
Unto the Grace, in which he stood before.

The King, himself now finding over-reach'd,
(As once before, when *Nathan* to him preach'd
That *saving Sermon*; with this odds, that he
Was *guilty* then: but now from *Guilt* was *free*)
Injoin'd the Woman, that she should not hide
From him the Thing he ask'd: but should confide
In him, that he would no Advantage take
Against her. She consenting, thus he spake,
Is not the Hand of Joab in this Thing?
She own'd it was. Then *Joab* hither bring,
The King reply'd.—And *Joab* being come,
He gave Command, *Go fetch the young Man home.*

The Gen'ral's Countenance his Joy display'd,
And, Thanks return'd, and low Obeysance made.
To *Geshur's* splendid Court, with speed he flies,
The Prince receiv'd him with a glad Surprise:
The welcome News thro' all the Court resounds,
The Joy was gen'ral, yet in decent Bounds,
On *Abfalom's* Account, who ever since
He came to *Geshur*, like a noble Prince,
Himself conducted wisely, and so well,
No Complaisance could *Abfalom's* excel;
So gentle, courteous, and so princely fair,
Each Heart was gain'd by his obliging Air.
His Smiles were Honours, ev'ry Courtier strove
Himself to render worthy of his Love.

This

This him to them so feelingly endears,
 They could not think of Parting, without Tears.
 Yet go he must : Affection, Friendship, all
 Must vail, and yield to a *paternal* Call :
 Tho' Duty seem'd to claim the greatest Share ;
 Yet Int'rest here no little Weight did bear.

With *Joab* therefore *Absalom* returns
 From *Geshur* to *Jerusalem*, and burns
 With *thirsty* Hopes, and Expectation great,
 Of highest Favour from the Royal Seat.

But Oh ! the Disappointment it must bring
 To his *aspiring* Mind, when, from the King
Joab returning, let him understand,
 It was to him the King's express Command ;
 That he should strait to his own House resort,
 And not attempt to shew himself at Court.
 For well the King consider'd, 'twas not meet,
 Although his Love was great, his Son should see't.
 Nor that he him to special Grace should take,
 Who had so lately made his Heart to ake.

Though therefore, circumvented by a Wile,
 He had recall'd him from his Self-Exile :
 And sav'd his Life from Danger of the Law :
 He held it best to keep him still *in awe*.
 Hoping, in Time, he to a better Sense
 Might thereby bring him of his great Offence.

When

When two full Years Prince *Absalom* had lain
 Under *Confinement* ; not without *Disdain*,
 That he had not been suffer'd, in that Space,
 His Father to Salute, or see his Face :
 Impatient of Restraint, he now did send
 For *Joab* (both his Kinsman and his Friend)
 To try if he, howe'er he sped, would bring
 Him to the *long'd-for* Presence of the King.

But truly *Joab* (who, perhaps, might find
 How to his Son the King did stand inclin'd)
 Would not at *first*, nor *second* Summons, come :
 Which Usage so provok'd Prince *Absalom*,
 That he resolv'd, since fair Means seem'd to fail,
 He'd try by rougher Methods to prevail.
 He bid his Servants, therefore, set on Fire
 A Field of *Joab's*. *Joab*, to enquire
 The Cause of this *Abuse*, did quickly come :
 And this *blunt* Answer had from *Absalom*.

Thou know'st I for thee sent, once and again ;
 But thou from coming to me did'st refrain.
 No other Means b'ing left, I this did take,
 To see if *Int'rest* would thee *kinder* make.
 Thee to the King now suffer me to send,
 And beg, he to my Life will put an End,
 Rather than under this Restraint me keep,
 Confin'd so, that abroad I may not peep.
 Why didst thou me (a most unhappy Wretch!)
 From Grandfire *Talmai's* Court, in *Geshur*, fetch;
 Under

Under Pretence, that I should be restor'd
Unto the Favour of my Royal Lord?
Better it were, I thither might go back
(Where I nor *Liberty*, nor *Love* did lack)
Than here remain; where I no Comfort have,
But what arises from an *hoped* Grave.
Therefore beseech the King me once to grace,
With the fair Aspect of his Royal Face.
If Live I may not in his gracious Eye;
Let me not Live at all: *I choose to die.*

Though *Joab* gladly would himself excuse
From going on this Errand. Yet refuse
He knew not how. The Prince hard presses for't.
And he, o'ercome, doth trudge away to Court.
Come thither, he a *proper Season* waits,
And then so *aptly* to the King relates
The moving Case of his beloved Son;
His Father's Fondness soon he gain'd upon;
Affection help'd his *Judgment* to betray;
And to the Prince's Suit prepares the Way:
For now *Affection* made his *Judgment* doubt,
If he against his Son should *still* hold out,
He might endanger, e'er he was aware,
The driving of his Son into *Dispair*.
Wherefore he order'd *Joab* strait to bring
Absalom to his Presence: th' only Thing
By both desir'd. *Joab*, o'erjoy'd, doth haste
To *Absalom*: and brings him back as fast.

He

He to the King doth all *Submission* show ;
 And at his Royal Feet himself doth throw.
 The King in Kindness, lifts him from the Ground,
 Glad such Humility in him was found,
 Embraces, and salutes him with a Kiss,
 In Sign he pardon'd what he'd done amiss.

CHAP. IV.

O The *Intemp'rance* of th' *ambitious* Mind !
 To no due Bounds, or Medium confin'd !
 How doth it *swell* ! How doth it *soar* on high !
 As if it *fain* would climb above the Sky.

This *topping* Temper soon itself did show
 In *Absalom*, and wrought his Overthrow.
 He that, at home confin'd but t'other Day,
 Greatly deprest in Mind, obscurely lay,
 O'erwhelm'd almost with Grief, and cold Dispair ;
 No sooner felt the *Warmth* of Courtly Air :
 But, as the *Winter-Flie*, whom Heat doth bring
 To Sense, begins to *Buz*, and take the Wing :
 So he, the Royal Favour feeling, strait
 Took Wing, and soar'd above his proper State.

Unsteady Nature, varying like the Wind,
 Hurries to each *Extream* th' *unstable* Mind.
 At Sea *becalm'd*, we wish some *brisk*er Gales
 Would on us rise ; and fill our *limber* Sails.

We

We have our Wish : and strait our *Skiff* is tofs'd
 So high, we are in Danger to be lost.
 At Land, we would be *foremost* ; make a stir ;
 And Ride at *Neck-and-all*, with *Whip* and *Spur*.
 We would *be*, would *have* all : are loath to stay.
 For future Rights, 'till Providence make Way.

This is the Nature of *ambitious* Man,
 Soaring as *fast*, as *high* too, as he can.
 Whereas, would we but bridle our Desire,
 'Till the due Time, we might rise safely higher:

This was the Ruin of this goodly Prince,
 Let loose too soon ; his lofty Mind, e'er since,
 Aim'd nothing *lower* than the *highest* Seat ;
 Thought nothing, for himself, too *good* or *great*.
 He on the Crown look'd with a longing Eye :
 Nor spake, nor dream'd of ought but *Monarchy*.
 And whensoever he saw the Royal *Throne*,
 Could scarce forbear to call that Seat *his own*.
 His own it might have been, would he have staid,
 Until his Father's Head was fairly laid ;
 But his *Impatience* thought each Day a Year,
 Each Year an Age, until the Throne was clear.
 Nor would he stay 'till *Providence* should make
 His Way to th' Crown, but his own Way would take.

Accordingly, he did assume such State,
 As far transcends the highest Subject's Rate.
Horses he did, and *Chariots* too provide ;
 And *Fifty* Men, in whom he could confide,

To

To Run before him : which might seem to be,
Either for *State*, or for *Security*.

High State it shew'd, if these his *Lacques* were :
A strong Defence, if he did them prepare
For his *Life-Guard*. On which foe'er Account
It was ; it did a Subject's State surmount.

This Pomp, however, made the People gaze :
And in the Mob did Admiration raise.
For *vulgar* Eyes with *gawdy* Shews are caught ;
And from *admiring*, to *Submission* brought.
But he had other Ways to circumvent
The *better* Sort : and thus to work he went.

Early each Morn, he to the Court would go ;
And there, beside the Gate, would stand, that so
Whatever *Suitor* to the King did come,
For Judgment, must pass by Prince *Absalom*.
Then would he call him near, and ask his Name,
What his Affair might be, and whence he came.
Then feigning a Concern the Matter might
Go well, he'd say, *take Care thy Cause be right* :
But then, with *down cast* Look, and *shaking* Head,
Added, *The King hath no Man*, in his stead,
Deputed thee to bear ; so that, though right
Thy Cause should be, thou suffer may'st by Might.
Then, in a Kind of discontented Tone
(As if he did the Peoples Case bemaon).
He'd *mutter* something ; then would make a Stop ;
And, in a *softer* Tone, this *Wish* would drop ;
Would

Would I were made *Chief-Justice* in the Land !
That every Man, who hath a Cause in hand,
Might *come to me* ; and I would *do him Right*,
How poor see'er : None should oppress by Might.
Would I were on the Bench, that I, from thence,
Might equal Justice unto all dispense !

When thus himself he'd artfully extoll'd,
And thereby the poor *Suitor* had cajoll'd
To bow before him, and Obeysance make :
Into his Arms he would the *Client* take,
Hug and Embrace him ; nor would him dismiss,
Till he had *charm'd* him with a *treach'rous Kiss*.
Thus did the Son, by such alluring Arts,
Bereave the Father of his Peoples Hearts ;
And draw them to himself ; while the good King
Of all Things, least suspected such a Thing.

By this Time, *Absalom* is thought to be
Forty Years old. And finding now, that he
So strong a Party had, that he durst venture,
Upon the Crown, by *Force of Arms*, to enter ;
And drive his too kind Father from the Throne,
(Which he, among his Faction, call'd *his own* :)
He held it best yet, *Policy* to use ;
His royal Parent further to abuse ;
And gain some Time, from his beguiled Father :
That so he might his scattered Forces gather
Unto a gen'ral Rendezvouze ; and then
Pour on the King a mighty Host of Men.

For

For this End therefore, to the *Court* he went,
And that he might be sure to circumvent
The King ; this *feigned* Tale he did devise,
His Treason, with Religion, to disguise.

‘ While I, at *Geshur*, did an *Exile* live,
‘ I vow’d a *Vow*, that if the Lord would give
‘ Me *Favour* in thy Sight, and bring me home,
‘ That I, in Peace, unto this Place might come ;
‘ Then would I to the Lord an *Offering* make
‘ At *Hebron*, where I Life at first did take.
‘ Now therefore, *gracious Sire*, be pleas’d, I pray,
‘ To grant *thy Servant* Leave ; that go I may
‘ To *Hebron*, and perform the Vow I made
‘ Unto the Lord.’ The good King thus *betray’d*
By *feigned* Words, said, *Go in Peace*. He might
Have better said, *Come back in Peace, at Night*.
But wise Men, good Men, suffer’d are sometimes,
To fall into the *Snares* their former *Crimes*
Have for them laid. Thus this unwitting King
Helps forward that, which must upon him bring
The *Judgment* * long since giv’n. *Uriah’s Blood*
Is not yet silenc’d: but *still cries aloud*.

To *Hebron* now Prince *Absalom* doth post,
And sends his *Scouts* abroad, through every Coast
Of *Israel*, that they might Notice give
To all his Friends, who did dispersed live

In

* 2 Sam. xii. 11.

In all the Tribes; that when they once should hear
 The *Trumpet* sound, they should for him appear
 In Arms imbody'd; and where e'er they came,
 Amongst their Neighbours, they should him
 proclaim,

And that, *not faintly*; but in *lofty* Strain,
 Say, *Abalom doth now in Hebron reign.*

With *Abalom* too, from *Jerus'lem* went
Two Hundred chosen Men; who his Intent
 Knew nothing of; but went unto his Feast;
 By which his Strength, and Numbers were increas'd.
 For these were Men of *choice* Abilities
 For War; as well to fight, as to advise.

But he for Counsel chiefly did rely
 Upon *Abitophel*, whose Fame so high
 Was in Esteem, that whatsoe'er he said,
 Was, as the *Oracle* of God, obey'd.
 Him, who had *Councillor* to *David* been,
Abalom now did to his *Faction* win:
 And, from his City *Giloh*, did the Wretch
 To his Head Quarters, now at *Hebron*, fetch.
 And now this *foul Conspiracy* grew strong,
 The People did so thick to *Hebron* throng.

C H A P. V.

WHILE thus the *Son*, with a disloyal Mind,
His *Father* to dethrone, by Force design'd :
Some loyal *Subject*, who had Notice got,
Of both the *Preparation*, and the *Plot*,
Sped to the Court, that he might timely bring
The News, howe'er unwelcome, to the King ;
That he might not, altho' he were betray'd,
At unawares be *slain*, or *Pris'ner* made.

Half breathless rushing in, he therefore said,
Alas ! my Lord, O King, Thou art betray'd !
The Men of *Israel* are from thee rent,
And *Absalom* to Crown are fully bent.
Him they already have proclaimed King ;
And mean thy *Scepter* from thy Hand to wring.
So universally they take his Part,
As if, in this, they *all* had but *one* Heart.
And he is drawing out his *Troops* apace,
As if he aim'd to seize thee in this Place.

So *strange* a Message, so *untought* a Thing,
No wonder if it did surprize the King.
Yet did it not from him his Judgment take,
Nor him so wholly void of Counsel make ;
But that he thought, 'Twas better leave the City,
Then hazard it unto the *Rebels* Pity.

Calling

Calling his Servants therefore, *Come*, said he,
Since we're betray'd, *arise, and let us flee.*
If *Absalom* should find us *in* this Place,
He'll sack the Town, perhaps, if not deface
The Royal Buildings, and, us to despite,
The People also, that are in it, smite.
Whereas, if we be gone, us he'll pursue,
So Place, and People, may that Hurt eschew.

This said, and in his House Ten Women left ;
He, of his *native* Courage not bereft,
March'd forth: his Household Servants him attend;
And unto *Kidron-Brook* their Course they bend.

When there arriv'd, his little Troop he musters,
(More like the *Gleanings*, than the thickset *Clusters*
Of a *full* Vintage :) Yet enough to shew,
He had some Friends yet left: though *but a few*.

Besides his Household (which was large) went o'er
Six Hundred fighting Men ; who, long before,
Had been Companions of his suff'ring State
Under King *Saul* : and whom no adverse Fate
Could make to *flinch* ; or so far to transgress
The Bounds of Loyalty, as in Distress
To leave him. These his *Vet'ran* Soldiers were :
And, in his Cause, would sell their Lives full dear.
These were his *Life-Guards*, Men of wond'rous
Might,
Strong, hardy, brave, and valiant in Fight.

With these the gallant *Ittai* did consort,
The noble *Gittite*, lately come to Court.
The King observing him approach the Brook,
Thus kindly to the gen'rous Alien spoke ;
Wherefore should'st thou unhapp'ly take a Part
In my *Misfortunes*, who a *Stranger* art
But lately come. Return into the City:
Thou yet art safe. And it would be great Pity,
That I should draw thee into *Danger*, who
Neither knows what to do, nor where to go.
Take back thy Brethren therefore, and abide
With the *new King*, till God the Cause decide.
And, for the *Kindness* thou to me dost show,
May *Truth* and *Mercy* always with thee go.

The noble *Gittite*, with a brave Disdain,
Heard out the King. But then could not refrain
From telling him, how much himself he held
In *Honour* bound, to serve him in the Field.
He therefore solemnly protested, that
He would not leave him in his *adverse* State.
But, with his Leave, wherever he should bend
His Course, he would upon him there attend.
Come Life or Death, he ne'er would him forsake,
But with him, to the last, his Lot would take.

So brave a *Resolution* needs must cheer
The King, not much inur'd to let in Fear.
Then passing on together without stay ;
They to the Wilderness direct their Way.

But

But *Zadock* and *Abiathar*, who were
 At that Time *Priests*, and of the *Ark* took care ;
 Fearing some Injury it might receive,
 If at *Jerusalem* they it should leave,
 Had brought it with them : Which when *David*
 He stop'd, and with a reverential Awe, [saw,
 To *Zadock* said, Bear back the *Ark* again
 Into its Place, and let it there remain.
 For, if the Lord should me vouchsafe the Grace,
 That I once more with Joy, may see his Face ;
 He'll bring me back, and I shall then behold
 His Habitation as in Days of old.
 But if he thus say, *I have no Delight.*
In David : lo, I stand here, in his Sight,
 Ready to bear, with *unrepining* Mind,
 What he, to do to me, shall be inclin'd.
 For well I know his *Judgments* all are just :
 And in his *Mercy* I repose my Trust.

The *Ark* dispos'd ; yet was not *David* clear :
 He something had no say in *Zadock's* Ear.
 He therefore ask'd him ; Art not thou a *Seer* ?
 (Thou, and *Abiathar* too, thy *Compeer*)
 You therefore both will out of Danger be,
 Your *Office* giving you *Immunity*.
 Return into *Jerusalem* and stay,
 As near to *Absalom*, as well you may.
 Explore his Counsels. Pick up what you can ;
 And send it to me by some trusty Man.
 Thy Son, and his, fit *Messengers* may be,
 To bring *Intelligence* from you to me.

I, in the Plain above, will stay until
I hear from you how Things go, well or ill.

Then parting, with the *Ark* the Priests go back;
The King went forward; tho' with Pace but slack.
Grief now seiz'd deeper, from a Sense that he
Must from the *Ark* of God thus banish'd be;
And that by his own Son (Rebellious Child!
To whom he'd ever been but over mild)
But then, considering that the Lord his God,
Did him chastise, in Mercy, with this *Rod*;
He call'd to Mind *Uriah's* Blood, and wept;
Watering, with Tears, the Ground whereon he stept.
Barefoot he went, and had his *hoary* Head
(Sure Sign of highest Grief) close covered.
But when he had, at length attain'd the Top
Of *Olivet*, he there did make a stop,
And worshipped the Lord: with humble Heart
Kissing the sacred Hand, which made him smart.

While here he staid, good *Hushai* came to meet him,
And with his kind condoling Strains, did greet him.
Hushai, his faithful Servant, and true Friend:
Whom hearty Sorrow made his Garment rend,
And Earth to lay upon his mournful Head.
Hushai, at Court, to Courtly Counsels, bred.
Hushai, than whom the King no Servant had,
More able, nor to serve his Lord more glad.

The King, at sight, concluding where he best
Might be dispos'd, to serve his Interest,

Said

Said to him, ' If thou passest on with me,
' Thou unto me shalt but a Burden be.
' Go therefore to the City, and Salute
' King *Abalom*. That done, prefer thy Suit,
' That thou mayst be his Servant, as thou wast
' His Father's faithful Servant, in Days past.
' By this Means thou the *Counsels* of the Great
' *Abitbophel*, mayst, for my good, defeat.'
Then him directing how he might convey
Intelligence: Each took his proper Way.

Not far had *David* gone beyond the Top
Of *Olives* Mount, when he another stop
Was fain to make. There *Ziba* ready stood
Holding two Asses, laden both with Food,
(Fine *Manchet*, Summer *Fruits* and luscious *Wine*)
Whereon the King might, when he pleased, dine.

Well might the King suppose, this Present came
From his Friend's Son, *Mephibosheth* the *Lame*;
Since *Ziba* brought it: who full well he knew,
Was *Steward* to *Mephibosheth*. This drew
The King to ask, Where is thy Master's Son,
That he came not? False *Ziba* thereupon
Reply'd. He at *Jerusalem* doth stay,
Blown up with Hopes: nor did he stick to say,
Now shall the House of Israel restore
To me the Crown which my Grandfather wore.

The King, not *Ziba's* Treachery suspecting,
Too easily believ'd him; and reflecting

On the detestable Ingratitude,
 Which he suppos'd *Mephibosheth* had shew'd;
 Not having Time to hear the Cause, forsook
 The Course of Justice, and for granted took
 The Proofless Charge of a *designing* Knave,
 And thereupon a partial Judgment gave.
 Whereby he from the *Innocent*, unheard
 Took *all* he had : and *all* that *all* conferr'd
 On the *unjust Accuser*, who deserv'd
 A *Rope* much rather, had not *Justice* swerv'd.
 The *fawning* Traytor having sped so well,
 Upon his *Knees* before King *David* fell ;
 And, full o'th' wond'rous Gratitude he feign'd,
 Gave Thanks for what his Treachery had gain'd.

Near *Baburim*, as *David* pass'd, appear'd
 A rude Insultor of the vulgar Herd,
 From *Saul* descended, *Shimei* by Name,
 Who lowdly rail'd and curs'd as he came.
 ' Come out, said he, come out, thou Man of Blood,
 ' Thou Son of Belial ; who too long hast stood ;
 ' The Lord hath now return'd upon thee all
 ' The guiltless Blood, which, in the House of *Saul*,
 ' Hath by thy Means been shed. The Kingdom, thou
 ' Usurped hadst, is taken from thee now ;
 ' And given to thy Son. Thou taken art
 ' In the Devices of thine evil Heart.'

Nor staid he here. From *Words* he fell to *Blows* ;
 Both *Dust* and *Stones* he at King *David* throws,
 And

And on his Servants, who about him were
On either Side ; to whom 'twas hard to bear.

Abishai, David's Nephew, seem'd to take
This most to Heart ; and thus the King bespake.
Why should this dead Dog curse my Lord the King ?
Let me go to him : and his *Head* I'll bring.

But *David* (who, although right well he knew,
That railing *Shimei's* Charge was quite untrue,
So far as he unto the House of *Saul*
Apply'd it, where he had *no Guilt* at all :
Yet, in the *Book of Conscience* daily read
His *Guilt* and *Doom*, for Blood unjustly shed :
Uriah's Blood, for which he knew full well,
This Judgment from the Lord upon him fell.)
Would not permit *Abishai*, for his Sake,
Veng'ance on cursing *Shimei* to take.

- ' Let him curse on, said he : for, if he Curse
- ' By God's Command, who can think him the worse ?
- ' Don't you behold, said he, that my own Son,
- ' Who from my Bowels sprang (and Cause hath none)
- ' *Usurps my Throne* : hath kindled mortal Strife
- ' Amongst my Subjects ; yea, and *seeks my Life* ?
- ' How much more then may this rude *Benjamite*
- ' Be born with, though he do me great Despight !
- ' *Let him alone.* If God hath bid him Curse :
- ' It may, perhaps for me be ne'er the worse.
- ' Who knows, but that the Lord on me may look
- ' With Pity ; when he sees how well I took

' Th'

‘ Th’ Affliction he laid on me : and with good
 ‘ May me requite, for *Shimei*’s cursing Mood.’

C H A P. VI.

BY this Time, to *Jerusalem* was come,
 In Royal Equipage, King *Absalom* :
 Leading, besides his *Train*, a numerous *Host*
 Of armed Men, drawn out of every Coast.

Amongst his Friends, who made the greatest haste
 Him to Salute, *Hushai* was not the last.
 He, coming to his Presence, cry’d aloud
God save the King, God save the King (and bow’d)
 Under which Words he might his Meaning hide,
 For they might well to *David* be apply’d.

Absalom had a Mind it seems, to try
 Whether he safely might on him rely.
 Wherefore he, at first Meeting, on him play’d,
 And, with a kind of *Exprobration* said,
 How now ! *Is this thy Kindness to thy Friend !*
 Why went’st thou not, that thou mightst him defend !

Nay, but his will I be, *Hushai* reply’d,
 Him will I serve : with him will I abide,
 Whom God, and all the Men of *Israel* chuse :
None shall me of Unfaithfulness accuse.
 Should not I serve in Presence of his Son,
 As I thy *Father* serv’d (now he is gone)
 Surely, as I was then at his Command :
 So will I henceforth in thy Presence stand.

All which he so *equivocally* spake,
 That each the Words might in his *own* Sense take.
 Self-flatt'ring *Absalom*, elate with Pride,
 The Whole, as in his Favour meant, apply'd,
 And straight, by honest Guile, in Part, deceiv'd,
 Among his Council *Hushai* he receiv'd.

A *Council* call'd, he bid them think upon
 The Work; and tell him what should first be done.
Abitophel (who would not take it well,
 That any, but himself, should *bear the Bell*)
 Stood up, and *Absalom* he thus bespake;
 ' Thy Father's *Concubines* directly take,
 ' And in most publick Manner them defile.
 ' Which will reputed be a Crime *so vile*,
 ' That nothing ever can for it *alone*,
 ' So will the People cleave to thee alone.'
 The Counsel pleas'd: *Absalom* lik'd it well.
 All Praise their Oracle, *Abitophel*.

Forthwith a *Tent* on the House-Top was spread,
 Where *Absalom* his Father's Wives should Bed.
 He did so; void of Grace, and void of Shame;
 And publickly his Father did defame.
 By which the *Sentence*, that before, from Heav'en,
 Was, by the *Prophet*, unto *David* * given,
 Was now fulfill'd: fulfill'd to the Extent.
May the Example still the like prevent!

Now did the treacherous *Abitophel*
 (Finding his wicked Counsel pleas'd so well)

Proceed

* 2 Sam. xii. 11.

Proceed to Counsel further. ‘ Now let me
 ‘ Forthwith choose out 12 Thousand Men, said he,
 ‘ And go on the Pursuit, this very Night,
 ‘ While *David*’s weary, and unfit to fight.
 ‘ So shall we strike him, and his Men with Fear,
 ‘ That they’ll forsake him; & we’ll smite i’th’Rear
 ‘ The King alone (whom only thou dost lack
 ‘ To be cut off) and bring the People back.’

This Counsel was approved of, by all
 Then present: Yet King *Absalom* bid, call
Hushai the *Archite*, that (said he) we may
 Hear also what he, in this Case, can say.

Hushai brought in, the King to him did tell
 The Counsel given by *Ahithophel*.
 Then ask’d. *Dost thou approve it? If not, shew
 Thy Reasons, and direct us what to do.*

The wary *Archite* (knowing very well
 The haughty Temper of *Ahithophel*:
 That he might not be thought him to neglect)
 Express’d his Mind in Words to this Effect.

Although I know, of all that fill this Table,
 There is not, *in the Main*, a Man more able
 For Counsel, than the great *Ahithophel*,
 Who doth in Wisdom, others far excel:
 Yet, at this Time, and in the present Case,
 I must confess, I cannot go *his Pace*.

‘ If thou, with so much Speed, should’st forward rush;
 ‘ Thou’lt hazard all upon too sharp a Push.
 ‘ *Thy Father is a Man of War*, thou know’st,
 ‘ And will not lodge at Night among the Host.
 ‘ He now, no doubt, is in some Pit or Cave;
 ‘ Where he himself, from a Surprise, may save.
 ‘ Besides, both he and all his Men, we know,
 ‘ Are *mighty Men of Valour*; and will show
 ‘ When once engag’d, no Weariness in Fight;
 ‘ But, stung with Fury, will exert their Might:
 ‘ Chaf’d like the Mountain Bear, of Whelps bereav’d,
 ‘ With double Force, as doubly they’re aggriev’d,
 ‘ They’ll deal their Rage around, and scorn to yield
 ‘ To twice Ten Thousand Men the Bloody Field.
 ‘ Whereas thy Men, undisciplin’d and raw,
 ‘ Too likely may, when firmly stood, withdraw,
 ‘ And *turn the Back*, and some be overthrown:
 ‘ Which when it shall among the Rest be known,
 ‘ Will raise a *Rumour*, throughout all thy Host,
 ‘ That *Abfalom* the Field hath wholly lost:
 ‘ And where that Rumour takes, it will prevail,
 ‘ To make the *Courage* of the *Stoutest* fail.
 ‘ So shalt thou lose the Day; and either die
 ‘ Upon the Spot, be *ta’en*, or forc’d to fly.

‘ Which to prevent, my Counsel is, that all
 ‘ The Men of *Israel*, in general,
 ‘ From one End to the other, of the Land,
 ‘ Be drawn together, like th’ *unnumber’d* Sand
 ‘ On the Sea-Shore; and thou, their Lord and Head,
 ‘ Into the Field do them, in Person, lead.

‘ So

‘ So shall we on thy Father, and his Men,
 ‘ Fall, like the Dew upon the Ground : and then
 ‘ Nor he, nor any that are with him, can
 ‘ Escape our Hands : we’ll have them to a Man.

‘ But in some Fort should he himself immure,
 ‘ We’ll there invest him round, ’till we procure
 ‘ Ropes to the Place, and draw it down by force,
 ‘ And sink it in the *rapid* Water-Course.’

Thus *Hushai*, like an Orator, did play
 Upon his Hearers *Weakness* ; and yet they
 Did not perceive it, nor his Purpose see ;
 But Prince and People did as One agree,
 That *Hushai*’s Counsel did by far excel
 The Counsel given by *Aithophel*.

Nor is it strange : for ’twas the Lord that wrought
 This Change in them ; that what before they thought
 Was good, they now *dislik’d* : that he might bring
Justice on *Absalom* their *Self-made* King.

But when *Aithophel* (who ne’er could brook
Competitor, nor on a *Rival* look,
 But rack’d with Envy, to behold that they
 Not only were resolv’d to disobey
 His *Counsel* (which he as *Direction*, gave ;
 And did expect *Applause*, and *Thanks*, to have)
 But *Hushai*’s Counsel did to his prefer,
 (Not able, an Affront so high, to bear)
 Saddling his Afs, away he strait did Trot ;
 And, in good Time to his own City got.

Where,

Where, having *wisely* settled his Affairs,
 He to the *Halter's Help*, with speed, repairs :
 Which having firmly fasten'd to a Rafter,
 He stretch'd his Neck t' *avoid Affronts* hereafter.
 There let him hang : while we look back, and heed
 How *Hushai's* better Counsel did succeed.

When *Hushai* had done speaking, e'er he knew
 How it would be accepted, he withdrew ;
 And to the Priests (*Zadock, Abiathar*)
 Related what had past, and what a *Jar*
 Had been, in Counsels, 'twixt *Ahitophel*
 And *him* : and, what each had advis'd, did tell.
 But not yet knowing which would follow'd be,
 He wish'd them to inform the King, that he
 Might not that Night lodge in the Plain; but speed
 Him o'er the River, that he might be freed,
 From Death and Danger, which he might sustain,
 If he should stay 'till Morning in the Plain.

The *Priests* two Sons without the City stay'd,
 (For to be seen within they were afraid)
 To them their Fathers, by a certain *Maid*,
 The Message they should carry straight convey'd ;
 Which when they had receiv'd, away they hy'd,
 But, by a *Youth*, unhappily were spy'd,
 And thereupon pursu'd ; but by the Way,
 They, in a Well conceal'd, securely lay :
 A Matron o'er its Cover having spread,
Ground-Corn, as if to dry for making Bread :

And

And, when the Coast was clear they posted on ;
And told the Message, which they came upon.

David, thus warn'd arose : and, in the Night,
Pass'd over *Jordan*. By the Morning Light,
He, and the People with him, all were gone :
Nor of his Army miss'd they any one.

C H A P. VII.

TO *Mahanabim* now King *David* goes,
His *Friends* to meet with, and to miss his *Foes*.
This was the Place, where *Jacob*, long before,
God's *Angels* meeting, did his Help implore ;
And gave it then this Name : by which is shown
Two Hosts. God's Host of Angels : and his own.

Here *David* Friendship found, and was supply'd
With needful Things, while he did here abide :
Which was not long. *Abfalom*, now an Host
Had rais'd, of which he thought he well might boast.
Over his Army he *Amasa* made
His General. With *Banners* then display'd,
He over *Jordan* pass'd, a *Rebel* right,
Against his *Father*, and his *King*, to Fight.

When *David* knew, that his Son *Abfalom*,
With a great Host, was over *Jordan* come,
To give him Battle : he his Men drew forth ;
Who though not many, were all Men of worth :
And, though his Army was but small, he chose
It into three *Battallions* to dispose.

The

The *First* of these he unto *Joab* gave ;
Abishai, *Joab's* Brother, was to have
 The *Second* ; noble *Ittai* led the *Third* :
 Second to none, for Use of Spear and Sword.
 The King himself intended too to go
 At Head of them, as *Gen'ralissimo* :
 But that the People by no Means would yield,
 That he himself should *bazard* in the Field.
 They represented that the Enemy
 Would not regard, if *half* of them should die ;
 So much as if they him could take or slay.
 Therefore they begg'd, he from the Field would stay
 And, if Occasion should require, would send
 Them Succours. He was forc'd to condescend.

But when they march'd away, he, standing by,
 Shew'd a *paternal Passion* in his Eye.
 His *Bowels* roll'd towards his *graceless* Son,
 And (as *presaging* that the Field was won)
 Thus to the sev'ral *Generals* he spake ;
Deal gently with the young Man, for my sake.

The *Field* now taken, and the *Battle* join'd,
 The *Victory*, to *David's* Side inclin'd :
 But not without a cruel Slaughter made
 Of them that were by *Abalom* betray'd
 Into this Treason. *Twenty Thousand* fell
 On his Side. For, although he did excel
 In Numbers: yet, they fighting in a Wood,
 His Numbers could not do him half the Good,

M

As

As, in an open *champain Plain*, they might ;
Where they could every Man have come to fight.
Hopeless, at length the routed *Rebels* flee
And *David's Men* pursue them eagerly.

The Rebel *Absalom*, now forc'd to run
Where'er his fell Pursuers he might shun,
Confus'd with Rage and Horror, Guilt and Fear,
And pushing on the trackless Wood to clear,
Amongst the Boughs of a thick-spreading Oak,
His Head was caught, and fix'd as in a Yoke.
His *Mule* went on, and left him hanging there,
'Twixt Earth and Heaven, in the open Air :
Nor could he free himself, his bushy *Hair*,
His *Ornament* before, was now his *Snare*.
Him, hanging thus, a certain Soldier saw ;
And, passing by him with *respectful Awe*,
Hasted to *Joab*, and to him thus spoke :
I observ'd *Ab'slom* hanging in an Oak.
And didst thou! *Joab* said; why didst not smite
Him to the Ground, and *kill* him there *outright*?
Hadst thou done so, I would have kindly dealt
By thee, and given thee a *Soldier's-Belt*,
Beside Ten Shekels. O! cry'd out the Man,
Though I a *Thousand* Shekels might have wan,
I would not do't! For I did plainly hear
Our Lord the King (whom we ought all to fear)
A strict Charge give, that none should dare to touch
His Son, so as to Hurt him. And 'tis much
But thou thyself, if I this Thing had done,
Would'st have, amongst the rest, against me run.

Joab

Jo'b hastily reply'd ; and struck him mute :
No Time had he to trifle in Dispute.
Three Darts he snatch'd, and eagerly he sprung
To where the Prince now agonizing hung ;
Against him he directed ev'ry Dart,
And pierc'd him thrice, yet living, thro' the Heart.
Then caus'd his *Armour-Bearers*, Ten young Men,
Out-right to kill him ; which they did ; and when
He saw him dead, he a *Retreat* did sound ;
That no more *Hebrew Blood* might stain the Ground.

Thus fell th' *Usurper Absalom*. Thus fell
He, who against his Father durst rebel.
Thus fell a *Prince*, in Body and in Mind,
So well accomplish'd, that he seem'd design'd
For Government, would he the Time have staid,
And not his royal Father's Throne invade.

But blind *Ambition*, kindling hot Desire
In him, had set his *boiling* Blood on Fire.
He thought his Father drew too long his Breath,
Nothing would serve him but the *Crown* or *Death*.
The *Crown* he miss'd. A cruel *Death* he found ;
Stab'd, hackt & hew'd, with many a ghastly Wound.

His mangled Body to a filthy Pit,
Near to the Place he fell in, they commit :
And, without *Ceremony*, load his Bones,
With an huge Heap of *undistinguish'd* Stones.
Which must have serv'd him for a *Monument*,
Had not he, in his Life-time, with Intent

To keep his Name up, having then no Son,
Set up a *Pillar* (with his Name thereon :)
Which unto after-Ages did remain ;
And bore his Name, long after he was slain.

The Field thus won, and the unhappy Head
Of this unnatural Insurrection, dead ;
Their Care was next, what cautious Terms to use,
In sending to the King th' unwelcome News.

Some Strife arose, who should the *Tidings* bear;
And divers, for the Office, forward were.
Young *Abimaaz*, good old *Zadock's* Son,
Of *Joab* begg'd that he therewith might run ;
But *Joab* doubting that it would not be
Acceptable, unwilling was that he,
Whom he well lov'd, should go ; and rather chose
One less respected than his Friend t' expose.
For though the Victory was Cause of Joy,
The Death of *Abfalom* would that destroy.
He therefore bid *black Cush* go and tell
The King the Matter, just as it befel.
He ran. But *Abimaaz* not content,
Unless he too on the same *Errand* went,
Did press so hard, for Leave to Run, that he
Got Leave : but by meer Importunity.
Then setting forth, and running by the *Plain*,
He so much Ground did of the *Blackmoor* gain,
That he got first to Court ; and That did tell
Which needs must please : for he said, *all is well.*

But

But when the King, whose Heart was set upon
The Welfare of his *disobedient* Son,
Ask'd, Is the young Man safe? poor *Abimaaz*,
Not knowing what to say, did on him gaze:
Loth to confess what he could not deny,
Nor yet well knowing how to put it by:
Of that, which, with the King, was the main Chance,
He, too well knowing, pleaded *Ignorance*.

Then standing by, as bid; in *Cushi* ran,
And to relate his *Message* thus began.

*Tydings, my Lord, the King: for thee this Day
The Lord avenged bath; so that all they
That rose against thee, now are overcome.*
But cry'd the King, How is't with *Absalom*?
Say, Is the young Man safe? *Cushi* replies,
*So may it be with all thine Enemies,
As 'tis with him.*—This *David* understood,
And from his Eyes strait gushed forth a Flood
Of melting Tears. *Paternal* Pity wrought,
And overwhelmed each prudential Thought.
Up Stairs he went: and, as he went, he cry'd,
O my Son *ABSALOM*! *would I had dy'd*
For thee O ABSALOM, My Son my Son!
And thus he cry'd, and still he kept alone.
His Face he cover'd, and let loose the Rein
To boundless Grief; of *Noble Acts* the Bane:
This turn'd the *Triumph*, proper for the Day,
To Mourning. The brave Soldiers *slunk* away,

As Men aſham'd. They who *the Field had won,*
Stole in, as if they *from the Field had run.*

C H A P. VIII.

THIS was to *Joab* told, who weighing well
 How this Behaviour might the Courage quell
 Of all the Army ; or raiſe *Discontent* ;
 Which might be doubly dang'rous in th' Event.
 (For *Soldiers*, if themſelves they *ſlighted* find,
 Will ſhift their Sides as nimbly as the Wind)
 He, that he might his *Duty* not forſake,
 Went to the King, and *Soldier-like*, thus ſpoke.
 ' Thy faithful Servants (who have riſqu'd their Lives
 ' Thee to preſerve, thy Children and thy Wives)
 ' Thou ſhamed haſt, by ſhewing thou extends
 ' More Love to Enemies than to thy Friends.
 ' Thy Carriage this Day ſhews, thou doſt not heed
 ' Or Prince, or Servant: for, in very Deed
 ' If *Absalom* had liv'd, it's plainly ſeen,
 ' And we all dy'd, thou had'ſt well pleaſed been.
 ' Wherefore, *ariſe*, go forth, and kindly ſpeak
 ' Unto thy Servants ; eſe away they'll break
 ' Before the Morning : for I boldly dare
 ' Unto thee, by the God of *Iſrael*, ſwear,
 ' That, if thou come not in the Peoples Sight,
 ' There will not tarry one with thee this Night.
 ' And that will be worſe to thee, I avow,
 ' Than all the Evil thou haſt felt 'till now.

By

By this *bold* Speech, (perhaps more necessary,
Than either *decent*, or *discreet* and *wary*)
Joab so rous'd the King, that off he threw
His *Wailing-Fit*. And b'ing a Prince that knew
To his Condition how to suit his Hand,
And to *oblige* as well as to *command* ;
He hasten'd down unto the City Gate,
And there, as heretofore in Publick fate.
Which known, the People (who before had fled
Each to his Tent, as if they had no Head)
Now flock unto him, and with *deaf'ning* Sound
Of *joyful Acclamations* him surround.

And now a *gallant Emulation* rose
Amongst the Tribes ; Each to be *foremost* chose,
In shewing their *Affection* to the King,
And striving him in Triumph home to bring.
This first among those Men of *Isr'el* fell,
('Tis thought) whom *Absalom* had made rebel ;
Who that they might wipe off the *Guilt* and *Stain*
Of that *foul Crime*, and *Credit* so regain,
Spurr'd one another on, and seem'd to vie
Which should most signalize his *Loyalty*,
In bringing back the King : Whom now they *praise*,
Recount his *Merits*, and admire his *Ways*.

But *Judah*, his own Tribe, *too backward* were,
And *too regardless* of the common Care.
This *drowsy Negligence* did grieve the King.
That, therefore, them he to a Sense might bring

Of what became them, he a Message sends
To *Zadock* and *Abiathar*, his Friends ;
Commanding they should to the Elders speak
From him ; and thus the Matter to them break.

‘ Why are ye to bring back the King? the *last*?
‘ Why ye so *slow*, when others run so *fast*?
‘ Have ye forgot that ye my *Brethren* are,
‘ My *Bones* and *Flesh* (so have a greater Share
‘ In me than others?) Why do ye let slip
‘ The Season? and let others you *out-strip*
‘ In *Love* and *Loyalty*? This *Caution* take,
‘ And to yourselves Advantage of it make.’

He bid them also to *Amasa* say,
(*Amasa*, Gen’ral but the other Day,
Of all the Rebels) ‘ Art not thou to me
‘ A Kinsman, near by Consanguinity?
‘ Return to thy *Allegiance* without Dread:
‘ And be my *General*, in *Joab*’s stead.’

By these, and other such, engaging *Arts*,
He wrought so strongly on the Peoples Hearts,
That *Judab*, sensible they had been slack,
Now hasten’d to him, to conduct him back.

Got over *Jordan*, *Shimei* was the first
(*Shimei*, by whom he was so lately curs’d,
And rudely treated) who, the *Tide* thus turn’d,
Contrary to his Expectation, mourn’d,

Or

Or *seem'd* to mourn : perhaps the crafty Knave
Might Sorrow *feign*, his guilty Head to *save* ;
His Guilt and Danger now impell'd him in,
To beg King *David's* Pardon for his Sin.

He therefore, pushing in with *Judab*, led
A Thousand *Benjamites*, himself the Head ;
To shew, perhaps, what Interest he had
(Which was the worse in one that was so bad)
Or, if Occasion were, his Cause to plead,
And for him with the King to interceed.
This Traitor was the first who met the King,
And on his Knees *Peccavi* thus did sing.

‘ Let not my gracious Lord the King, said he,
‘ Impute this Day Iniquity to me !
‘ Nor bear in Mind what I perversly said,
‘ And did against him, when he was betray’d !
‘ For I, thy Servant know, that I therein
‘ *Am guilty of an execrable Sin.*
‘ Therefore I, with the *first*, am hither come,
‘ To wait upon my Lord, and bring him home.
‘ Pardon, my Lord O King, my Fault I pray,
‘ Let me find *Mercy* at thine Hand this Day.’

Before the King could any Answer make,
Abishai, *Zerviah's* forward Son, thus spake.
What ! shall not Shimei be put to Death !
That Rebel Shimei ! who with pois'nous Breath,
Did rail upon, and curse the Lord's Anointed !
What, less than Death, can be to him appointed !
This

This founded *harshly* in good *David's* Ear,
 And that to him he quickly made appear.
 For, 'What, said he, have I with you to do,
 'Ye busy Sons of *Zeruiah*, that you,
 'On all Occasions, still contrive to be,
 'As much as in you lies, averse from me?
 'Shall any Man be put to Death this Day
 'In *Israel*? The Lord, and I, say nay.
 'For have not I, think ye, good Cause to know
 'That I, so lately near an Overthrow,
 'Still King of *Israel* am, by Heaven's Grace!
 'Which should with you, as well as me, have Place.
 'For since the Lord this Day doth me restore
 'Unto the Throne on which I sate before,
 'It ought to be a Day of *thankful* Joy,
 'Which no sad *Execution* should annoy.
 Then turning unto *Shimei*, 'Thou, said he,
 'Shalt not be put to Death, for this, by me.'

The End of the FOURTH BOOK.

DAVIDES.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

AMong the rest, whom *Love*, or *Int'rest*, drew
 To meet the King, false *Ziba* came; who knew,
 When once his Master came in *David's* Sight,
 His base Deceit would then be brought to Light.
 That therefore he might still retain the Place,
 He had, by *Falshood*, gain'd in *David's* Grace;
 He, with his *Fifteen* Sons, and *Twenty* Men,
 Came, with Pretence to bring him home again.

But now *Mephibosheth* (who, being lame,
 Was not *so Nimble*) in due Season came,
 To clear himself from *Ziba's* false Report,
 And on the Wretch his *Treachery* retort.

When *David* ask'd, *why went thou not with me,*
Mephibosheth? 'My Lord O King, said he,
 'My faulty Servant *Ziba*, me deceiv'd:
 'And helpless me, he of his *Help* bereav'd.

‘ I order’d him to saddle me an Ass,
‘ That I thereon unto the King might pass,
‘ Not able else to go. *Away he flit,*
‘ And me of Means to follow wholly stript.
‘ Nor is that all ; but he hath *slander’d* too
‘ Thy Servant to my Lord, with Words untrue.
‘ But well I know, my Lord the King is wise :
‘ Do therefore what shall seem good in thine Eyes,
‘ I plead no *Merit* : All I have I place
‘ To the Account of thine abundant *Grace*.

Enough ! reply’d the King, my Word shall stand:
Thou and thy Servant shall divide the Land.

Thus having wrong’d *Mephibosheth* before,
In *stripping* him, *unbeard*, of all his Store :
That Wrong he by a somewhat *less Wrong* salves,
And doth the wrong’d Man Justice but by *Halves*.

Mephibosheth not only was most clear
From *Ziba’s* Charge, as plainly did appear ;
But also had so true a Mourner been,
For *David’s* Trouble, that he ne’er was seen
To *dress his Feet*, though lame ; nor *trim his Beard* ;
Nor in *clean Linnen* ever had appear’d
To cheer his Body, from the very Day
In which the King, distressed, went away,
Until the Day he came again ; which made
His Case the harder, being duly weigh’d.
Yet he, good Man, for Joy the King was come
In Peace, and Safety, to his Royal Home,
Regardless

Regardless what might to himself befall,
Cry'd, Ay, *Let Ziba*, if he will, *take all*.

We heard before of certain Men, that came
To bring the King Supplies, at *Mabanaim* ;
Of these *Barzillai* was, the *Gileadite* ;
Who did the King support with great Delight.
The Sense whereof did so affect the King,
That to *Jerusalem* he fain would bring
The *good old Man* ; that there he might have shew'd
The highest Marks of *Royal Gratitude*.

But good *Barzillai* did to go refuse,
And by his hoary Age himself excuse.
' I am, said he, full *Fourscore* Years of Age,
' And therefore, with good Reason, may presage
' My Days cannot be many. I am past
' The *Pleasures* of a *Court*, I cannot taste
' My Food with *Relish*. 'Twere an Oversight
' For me in vocal *Musick* to delight.
' My Ears too heavy to distinguish Sounds,
' And me the *Harbinger* of *Death* surrounds.
' Why then should I a further *Burden* be
' Unto my Lord the King ! oh no ! Let me
' Wait on thee over *Jordan*, and return
' Unto my City, and my Parents *Urn* :
' That there, amongst my People, I may die,
' And in my Parents Sepulchre may lie.
' But lo, my Son, thy Servant *Chimham* ; he
' Shall wait upon my Lord, and always be

' A.

‘ At thy Command. Him to thee I commit :
 ‘ And thou mayst do to him what thou thinks fit.’

That I’ll perform, said *David*, and to thee,
 Will give besides what thou shalt ask of me.
 This said, the good old Man he kindly kist,
 And with his Royal *Blessing* him dismiss.

Then march’d he on, attended very well,
 By *Judab*, and one *Half* of *Israel*.
 That *Half*, or *Part*, be it suppos’d to be,
 Which was not from the late Rebellion free :
 And therefore now would more officious seem,
 That they their shaken Credit might redeem.

But now again a fresh *Contention* rose
 Between them, which of *Friends* soon made them *Foes*.

These Men of *Israel* could not now contain
 Their Anger ; but did to the King complain
 Of *Judab* ; that they stole from them the King,
 That *they alone* might him o’er *Jordan* bring.
 The *Ground* of which they did not understand ;
 And therefore did their *Reasons* now demand.

The Men of *Judab* briskly answer’d thus :
 Because the King is *near a-kin* to us.
 More *brisk* than *true*. *David*, indeed, was so ;
 But not as *King*. Kings are a-kin, we know,
 To *all* their Subjects ; and *alike* to all,
 That faithful are to them, both *great* and *small*.

Why

Why, added *Judab*, do ye then contend?
 We did our Duty, without selfish End :
 We neither Eat at the King's Charge, nor yet
 Receiv'd from him a *Gift*, or *Benefit*.

But we (the Men of *Israel* reply'd)
 Have that to say which will the Cause decide :
 For we have *Ten* Parts in the King ; while you
 Cannot pretend, at most, to more than *Two*.
 Why then, since we the *greater* Number are,
 Did ye *despise* us ? and proceed so far,
 As to bring back our Sov'reign Lord the King,
 Without *consulting* us ; and thereby bring
Contempt upon us ? Thus they *brawl* and chide ;
 And toss the *fiery* Ball from Side to Side.
 But *Judab's* Words, in this Contention, fell
 More hot and fierce, than those of *Israel*.

C H A P. II.

HOW needful 'tis hot *Anger* to suppress,
Wrath to repel ; for *Wrath* is all *Excess* !
 Not to give Way to *Passion* ! Nor too high
 Resent an apprehended *Injury* !
 Much less to let the *Tongue*, upon Debate,
 Break loose, in Words which may exasperate.
 For often Words, like *Flint* and *Steel*, strike Fire,
 And thereby the *Contention* raise the higher.
 So have I seen what from a *Sparkle* came,
 Blown, by hot Breath, into a furious *Flame*.

Thus,

Thus, in the present *Contest*, it befel
 The Men of *Judah* and of *Israel*.
 The Men of *Israel* did resent *too* high
 A *slight* Offence: *Judah* at them let fly
 A *thund'ring Volly*, in such *cutting* Words,
 As wounded deeper than the sharpest Swords;
 And made the *Israelites* almost repent,
 That e'er to wait upon the King they went.

This being observ'd by *Sheba*, *Bichri's* Son,
 A *Benjamite*, who thither that Day run
 Among the rest; not willing to let go
 So fit a Time, his *faction's* Mind to show,
 He blew a Trumpet; and each *Israelite*
 To fresh *Rebellion* did thus invite:

' No Part have we in *David*; nor possess
 ' We any Share now in the Son of *Jess*.
 ' Wherefore, O *Israel*, to your Tents betake
 ' Yourselves forthwith; and *Jesse's* Son forsake.'

So spake this Man of *Belial*; and so did
 The Men of *Israel*: Strait away they slid
 From *David*; and with nimble Paces run
 After rebellious *Sheba*, *Bichri's* Son.
 But *Judah* clave intirely to their King,
 And him in Honour safely home did bring.

When thus return'd, the first Thing by him done,
 Was to *shut up* those *Concubines*, his Son

Defiled

Defiled had ; to whom he did allot
Fit Maintenance : but thenceforth us'd them not.

That done, he did *Amasa* to him call
(Whom he design'd to make his General)
And bid him all the Men of *Judah* raise,
And draw them up before him, in three Days.
Amasa went, but longer staid :
Although what haste he could, he doubtless made.
The King, uneasy at *Amasa's* Stay,
(As knowing Danger rises from Delay)
Abishai to him call'd, and bid him take
The Forces ready. After *Sheba* make
With all the Speed he could ; lest he should get
The fenced Towns, his Treason to abet.

Out march'd *Abishai*, leading *Joab's* Men,
The *Cherethites* and *Peletites* : but when,
Upon the Way, *Amasa* in did fall,
He took the chief Command as General.

Joab, not by the King expressly sent,
Yet, loving *Action*, with his Soldiers went,
And envying *Amasa* (as indeed
He envy'd all, who might himself succeed)
He manag'd so, that, from its Sheath, his Sword
Dropp'd unawares, as of its own accord ;
And quick, as tho' he would not seem to stand,
He snatch'd it up, and bore it in his Hand.

Amasa saw it : but suspected not,
That *Joab* therein against him had a Plot.
For, taking it to be an Accident,
He was, for his own Safety, less intent.
Joab advanc'd. And, under feigned Show
Of Kindness, ask'd him, *Brother, how dost do?*
And kissing him, most treach'rously, the while
A deadly Wound he gave him, with a Smile.
Out dropp'd his Bowels : There *Amasa* lay,
Welt'ring in Gore, amidst the publick Way.
So dy'd a great and valiant Man : so fell,
By Treachery, a Prince in *Israel*.]

On *Joab*, with *Abishai* went, in Quest
Of *Sheba*, leaving One, to tell the Rest,
That he, who favour'd *Joab*, and who was
For *David*, after *Joab* on should pass.
Which notwithstanding, as the Men drew nigh
The Place, where murder'd *Amasa* did lie ;
They made an *Halt* : nor would a Step advance ;
But gazing stood, like People in a Trance.
Which One observing, quickly (as behov'd)
Amasa's Corps, out of the Way remov'd,
Into a Field, and cover'd it : which done,
The warlike People after *Joab* run.

Sheba mean while, through all the Tribes had past,
And to the City *Abel* came at last ;
His Kindred *Beerites* join'd him on the Way,
To share with him the Fortune of the Day.

Here

Here *Sheba* fix'd ; the Place was fortify'd.
 Here *Jo'b* besieg'd him, and his Force apply'd.
Sheba, within, resolves (but all in vain)
 The Town against th' Assailants to maintain.
 The Siege grows hot ; the *Engines* shake the Wall:
 The next Assault is like to make it fall.
 Which done, the fur'ous Soldiers strait rush in,
 With Sword in Hand, and so the City win.
 Unthinking, in their Heat the People slay,
 And afterwards, they seize upon the Prey.

Foreseeing this, a prudent *City Dame*,
 Straight to prevent it, on the Bulwark came ;
 And cry'd to the *Besiegers*, hear, O hear :
 And speak, I pray, to *Joab* to come near,
 That we may treat a little—Straight he came,
 (Not thinking much to *Parley* with a *Dame*,
 Rough though he was) she his Attention won,
 An *antient Custom* urging, thus begun.

' In old Time they (said she) were wont to say,
 ' At *Abel*, surely, they will Counsel Pray ;'
 And so the Matter ended—Thus she tripp'd
 This bold Commander, who thro' Haste had slipp'd
 The Law of * *Heraldry* ; which did provide,
 That *Peace* should *first* be offer'd, fair Means try'd,
 Before a Seige was laid. Which had he done,
 He needed not, this *hostile Course* have run.

N 2

Thus

* 2 Deut. XX. 10.

Thus having gently pinched him, because
He had not well observ'd the *Fecial* Laws ;
She told him, though her Citizens, and she,
Both *faithful* were and *peaceable* : yet he
Sought to destroy a City, known full well
To be a *Mother* too, in *Israel*.
Then ask'd him, how he could the Seige advance,
To *swallow up* the Lord's Inheritance.

This startled *Joab*. Far be it from me,
That I unjustly should destroy, said he !
The Matter is not so. But ye protect
A *Rebel* who King *David* doth reject.
The Son of *Bichri*, *Sheba* is his Name,
(To you, and all true *Israelites*, a Shame)
Deliver him alone, and I, in pity
To you, will *raise* my Seige, and *free* your City.

Nay, said the Woman, sure, if that be all ;
His guilty Head we'll throw thee o'er the Wall.
Then to her Citizens the Woman went,
And did to them so wisely represent
The Case, their Danger ; which so close she put,
That from his Shoulders, *Sheba's* Head they cut,
And it immediately to *Joab* threw ;
Who, seeing that, a peaceful Trumpet blew.
They rais'd the Siege, and to their Tents retir'd,
And much the *Matron's* Wisdom all admir'd.

CHAP. III.

THese two *Rebellions* quelled, which of late
Gave such Disturbance to the *Civil State* ;
The Court *new-modell'd* was, *Removes* were made
Of Ministers, some *old* aside were laid.
Only fierce *Joab* (who was now more *bold*,
Than *welcome* to the King) his Place will hold.

A standing Army *David* muster'd then,
Consisting of *Three Hundred Thousand* Men,
Which into *Twelve Brigades* divided were :
Answering to the Twelve Months of the Year.
In each Brigade were *twice Twelve Thousand* ; and
A Thousand Officers did them Command.
These took their Turns, in Times of Peace, to be
A Month on Duty : and Eleven free ;
And as their Month return'd, in ev'ry Year,
Did each Brigade, at Court, in Arms appear.
But all, in Time of War did ready stand,
On Sound of Trumpet to obey Command.
These to the Field King *David* often drew,
His Enemies, on all Sides, to subdue.

Four Fields he with the *Philistines* did fight,
To each of which they brought a Man of Might,
An *Anakim*, one of *Goliab's* Race ;
Whom *David's* Warriors did not only chase :

But *single-handed* did them singly slay ;
And, each Time, bore the Victory away.

We read of British *Arthur*, and his Table
Of Warlike Knights (which some account a Fable,
But grant it true :) They never might compare
With *David's* Worthies, as their Deeds declare.
Which whoso lists may, if he please to look,
Read, at his Leisure, in the Sacred Book.

Not less concerned was this *pious* King
God's Honour to promote ; his *Praise* to sing ;
Advance his *Worship* ; Celebrate his Name ;
And others, with like Godly Zeal, inflame.

The *Ark* of God (which long before had been
The *Scorn* and *Scourge* of the proud *Philistine*,
And with *Abinadab* had since remain'd ;
Who for his entertaining it had gain'd
Great Blessings from the Lord) the zealous King,
With *Israel* and *Judab*, went to bring
Unto *Jerusalem* : but, through Mistake,
Erring, the sacred Law they plainly brake.

The *Levites*, (Sons of *Kobab*) ought to bear
The *Ark* upon their *Shoulders*. They, to spare
Their Shoulders (learning the *Philistian* Art)
Stick not to clap the *Ark* into a Cart.
God's *Ark* they trust to stumbling Oxen, which
Might have the *Ark* o'erthrown into a Ditch.

The

The Oxen stumbling, caus'd the *Ark* to shake ;
 Well meaning *Uzzab* Care thereof doth take :
 Puts forth his Hand, and holds it, lest it fall,
 And instant dies, which terrifies them all.

The Lord's a *Sovereign* Prince; and won't permit,
 That Man shall vary from his Law a whit.
 The Law was plain and easy ; all must say,
 The Fault upon the *Levites* only lay.
 Displeas'd was *David*, that through their defau't,
 This sudden Death was on poor *Uzzab* brought.
 And since the Stroke by God himself was giv'n,
 Much *David* fear'd the Majesty of Heav'n,
 Lest of the *Matter* he should disapprove,
 As well as *Manner*, e'en the *Ark's* Remove.
 Not daring therefore at that Time to bring
 The *Ark* unto *Jerusalem*, the King
 Left it at *Obed-Edom's* ; who was blest,
 During the Time the *Ark* with him did rest.

But Three Months after, on maturer Thought,
 The *Ark* into *Jerusalem* was brought
 In its due order ; and was placed there
 In a fair Tent, which *David* did prepare.
 For he, before he would attempt again,
 What he before had enterpriz'd in vain,
 Convening *Priests* and *Levites*, did declare,
 None but the *Levites* ought the *Ark* to bear.
 B'ing therefore charg'd, themselves to sanctify,
 That to the *Ark* they safely might draw nigh,

And take it up : which had they done before ;
 They had not suffer'd what they now deplore.
 Then on they go, and, as they go, rejoyce,
 Accomp'nying Instruments with Sound of Voice.

But none, of all the Company, more glad
 Appear'd to be, than *David* ; who was clad
 In *Linnen-Ephod*, and did leap and dance
 Before the *Ark*, with joyful Countenance.

Queen *Michal*, in his Dancing, *David* 'spies,
 And looking on him with disdainful Eyes,
 Brake forth in taunting Terms. For which she was
 Condemn'd her Life in *Barrenness* to pass.
 Sore Punishment indeed ! which her did bind
 From Bearing him, who was to save Mankind.
 The *Ark* thus brought, and with triumphant Grace
 And due Devotion, settled in its Place,
 The pious King, who did before it dance,
 Now studied how God's Honour to advance:

The *Priests* and *Levites* he dispos'd in Courses
 (As he before had done his Martial Forces)
 To each his proper Service he assign'd,
 Which they should execute, with willing Mind.
 Some to *Burnt-Offerings* and *Sacrifices* ;
 With *Rites* belonging to those Exercises.
 On Instruments of *Musick* some to play,
 And praise the Lord, upon each *solemn* Day.
 To *Prayer* some. Some to *give Thanks*. Some *bless*
 The Lord, and seek his Wonders to express.

Nor

Nor staid he here. His right *Religious* Mind,
 To Build an House for *Israel's* God, inclin'd.
 A *sacred Temple* he design'd to build,
 Which with majestick Glory should be fill'd.

This Godly Purpose of his royal Heart
 The pious King to *Nathan* did impart :
 The godly Prophet, of the Motion glad,
 That he might Strength to his Intentions add,
 (Too hastily, without Command) said, *Go,*
And what is in thine Heart to do, that do :
For God is with thee. The good Man, in this,
 Through strong Desire to have it done, did *miss.*

For that same Night the Lord his *Prophet* bid,
 Go tell his Servant *David* (which he did)
 That in thine Heart it was, an House to raise
 To me, wherein to celebrate my Praise,
I take it well. But therefrom thou art freed :
 Thy *Will*, by me, is taken for the *Deed.*
 Thou shalt not build the House : for thou hast led
 Great Armies to the Field, much *Blood* hast shed.
 But when thy Head is laid, a *peaceful* King,
 Who of thy Seed, and from thy Loins shall spring,
 Shall build my House ; which must be built *in Peace.*
Who builds for God, from War and Blood must cease.

Submissive *David*, with an humble Mind,
 Intirely to the Will of God resign'd ;
 In solemn Manner, did to God express
 His hearty Thanks, and his great Name did bless :
 And

And still, with Diligence, himself apply'd;
Materials for the *Building* to provide.
 Gold, Silver, Precious Stones, Brasses, Iron, Wood
 Of divers Sorts: whatever seem'd good
 For *choicest Use*, he in *abundance* stor'd,
 Won, from his Enemies, by Dint of Sword.
 To which he added so much of his own,
 As drew his Princes (when it once was known)
 Chief Fathers, Captains, Rulers, to express
 By their *free Offerings*, their *Thankfulness*.
 All which the King to *Solomon* demis'd,
 With such Instruction as the Lord advis'd;
 Assigning to each Part its proper Use,
 To build and ornament the sacred House.

C H A P. IV.

DURING the Reign of *David*, there had been,
 Three Years successively (no Ease between)
 A raging *Famine*; which did sore oppress
 The *Israelites*, and brought them to Distress.

The long Duration of this *pinching* Dearth
 (Which pin'd the People, and defac'd the Earth)
 Made *David*, of the Lord, the Cause enquire,
 Which against *Israel*, had provok'd his Ire.
 The Answer was, it was for *faithless Saul*,
 And for his *bloody House*, this Plague did fall
 Upon the People: which, perhaps, was due,
 Since, by their Help, the *Gibeonites* he slew.

How

How, when, or why, he did this Fact commit,
Is not deliver'd in the *Sacred Writ*.
We only read, *he did it in his Zeal*
For *Israel's* and *Judab's* Common-Weal.

Some think it was, when he the Witches flew,
And fought t' exterminate th' infernal *Crew:
Tho' when e'en that was done, is not so clear
From holy Writ, to be ascertain'd here.

The *Gibeonites* were not of *Israel*,
Although they with the *Israelites* did dwell.
They, of the *Amorite*, a Remnant were,
A People, *Israel's* Sword was not to spare.
Which they fore-knowing, by a *crafty-Wile*,
Good *Joshua*, and the *Princes*, did beguile.

These, feigning that *Ambassadors* they came
From a *far* Country, did a *Story* frame;
That they so long had on their Journey been,
That their *Provisions* (which was plainly seen)
Were grown corrupt. Their Bread, which hot
from Home,
They said they brought, was *mouldy* now become.
Old Leathern Bottles rent and bound they shew;
Which they affirm'd, when they set out were *new*.
Their *tatter'd* Cloaths, and *clouted* Shoes, did make
The *Israelites* give Heed to what they spake.
And, being, by this *Stratagem* betray'd,
An unadvised *League* they with them made,
To

* 1 Sam. xxviii.

To let them live : And all the Princes sware
By *Israel's* God : whose Justice will not spare
The Man, or People, that *in vain* shall take
His sacred Name : but them *Examples* make.

Well near four Hundred Years this *League* was kept
Inviolatè, till all the *Judges* slept ;
And the good Prophet *Samuel* was gone
To Rest ; and wicked *Saul* yet fill'd the Throne.
And probably it was not very long
Before his End, he did this cursed Wrong.
For had it early been, it may be thought,
The Punishment had *in his Time* been brought.

When now King *David*, on Enquiry, knew
What 'twas, that on the Land this *Judgment* drew ;
He call'd the *Gibeonites*, and bid them say,
What they would have him do to take away
The *Guilt* of Blood. And how he might atone,
For the Injustice *Saul* to them had done :
That *Satisfaction* given, they might bless
The Lord's Inheritance, with such Success,
That he, *appeasèd*, might his heavy Hand
Remove, and smile again upon the Land.
For Justice God regards. And therefore he,
How *low* so'er the wronged Party be,
Will *righted* have, before he will remove
The *Rod*, wherewith he doth *chastise* in Love.
The *Gibeonites* reply'd, its not our Will,
That, for our Sakes, thou any Man should kill
In

In *Israel* ; nor *Saul's* Possessions crave.
 The only Thing which we desire to have :
 The Man who us so cruelly annoy'd,
 And who would us intirely have destroy'd,
 Let *Seven of his Sons*, without Delay
 Deliver'd be to us, that them we may
 Hang up, in *Gibeab*, unto the Lord.
 To their Demand King *David* did accord.

Small Choice he had, out of *Saul's* House, to take
 Sev'n Men, *Atonement* for *Saul's* Sin to make.
Mephibosheth, he had a special Care,
 For *Jonathan* his Father's Sake to spare :
 Having Regard to *Friendship*, and the * *Oath*
 Which long before had pass'd between them both.

Of all *Saul's* Sons, but *Two* were now alive,
 (Unhappy they, that they did him survive,
 To undergo an ignominious Death
 For his Offence ;) Of these *Mephibosheth*,
 The Younger was : *Armoni* was the other :
 Both Sons of *Rizpah*, their afflicted Mother.
 Five Sons of *Merab* to make up the Tale
 He pitch'd upon. *Merab* might well bewail
 Her double Loss. Of *David* first, and then
 Of her *Five* Sons : A Set of proper Men
 For had she married *David* (which of right,
 She should have done) She, without Question might
 Have still enjoy'd her Sons : Herself have been
 A joyful Mother, and an happy Queen.

The

* 1 Sam. xx. 42.

The Number thus compleat, the King commands,
They should be given up into the Hands
Of the wrong'd *Gibeonites*. They, in a Word,
Hang'd them up, Man by Man, before the Lord.

This needful *Execution* being done,
When *Barley-Harvest* was but new begun;
And the dead Bodies being to remain
Unburied, 'till the Lord, by sending Rain
(The want of which was the *next Cause of Dearth*)
Should his Acceptance shew, and bless the Earth:
Religious Rixpab, that she might defend
These uninterred Bodies, did attend
During the Time, as well by Night as Day,
That neither *Bird*, nor *Beast*, might on them prey.
For which End, on the Rock, where they lay dead,
She a *Pavilion* did, of Sackcloth spread.

Which pious Act of hers when *David* heard
(After the Lord propitious had appear'd)
He took the *Bones* of *Saul*, which did remain
At *Jabesh Gilead* (where they long had lain)
Together with the *Bones* of *Jonathan*,
His noble Friend (a brave and worthy Man)
And gathering up the *Bones* of these, who now
Had hanged been: he on them did bestow
A *Funeral*; and did them all inter
In *Kish*, their Father's proper Sepulchre.
Which done, according to the King's Command:
The Lord was pleas'd again to bless the Land.

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

WHEN now the Lord had his *Anointed* blest,
 As well with *inward* Peace, as *outward* Rest;
 Having subdu'd his Enemies, and made
 His Neighbours, round about him, all afraid
 Him to Offend: so that he now could say
 Unto his Friends, *this is the happy * Day*
The Lord hath made; let us, with tuneful Voice,
And thankful Heart, in this his Day rejoice.

When to this *peaceful* State, the *happy* King
 Had thus attain'd, that he could sweetly sing
Psalms of Thanksgiving, while his Fingers play'd,
 And on his Harp *melodious* Musick made:
 The restless *Adversary* of Mankind
 (Who Mischief always had to Man design'd)
 Envy'ing th' Happiness which now beset,
 Under so good a King, poor *Israel*,
 Did with a Thought his royal Breast inspire,
 Which quickly set both *Heart* and *Head* on Fire.
 It kindled in him an *ambitious* Mind
 To know his Strength, and strongly him inclin'd,
Unmindful of the Almighty's Will, to dare,
 To number all the People fit for War.

To *Joab* therefore, as his General,
 He gave Command to go, and Number all
 The

The People, fit for War, in every Tribe ;
And, in a *Muste-Roll*, their Names describe :
That he might thereby know (vain Mind, alas !)
How Strong, in Military Force, he was.

The *Snare*, which *David* saw not, *Joab* saw,
And labour'd *David* from it to withdraw :
But all in vain. The King was fully bent
To have his *Will* : *Joab* about it went
Unwillingly ; and, in some Ten Month's Time,
Returning, shew'd the King his *Strength* and *Crime*.

For he no sooner the *Account* gave in,
But *David* smitten in himself, his Sin
Confessing, said, *I sinned greatly have,*
In that which I have done. And now I crave
Thy Pardon, Lord : and do most humbly pray,
That thou'lt be pleas'd to take my Sin away.
Ah ! sensible I am, that herein I
Have err'd and done exceeding foolishly.

Next Morning God, in high Displeasure, sent
His *Prophet*, to denounce a *Punishment*
To *David* for his Sin. The *Prophet* goes,
And thus his Message doth to him disclose.

- ‘ Thus saith the Lord, three Sorts of Punishment
- ‘ I set before thee, and am fully bent
- ‘ One of them to inflict : but leave to thee
- ‘ The Choice, which of them shall inflicted be.
- ‘ Choose

' Choose therefore One ; which I to thee may do :
 ' For thy Offence shall not *unpunish'd* go.
 ' Shall * Three Years *more* of Famine in thy Land
 ' (Which Three Years hath already suffer'd) stand?
 ' OR wilt thou, for *three* Months together flee
 ' Before thine Enemies, and *chas'd* be ?
 ' OR shall, throughout thy Land, the *Pestilence*
 ' For *three* Days rage, to punish thine Offence ?
 Be now advis'd, said *Gad*, think well what Word,
 I shall, from thee, return unto the Lord.

Here the *Gradations* sink, as it appears,
 From *Months* to *Days*, and unto *Months* from *Years*.
Three Months of bloody War, 'tis likely, may
 As many, as *three Years* of *Famine*, slay.
 And *three Days* *Pestilence*, accounted are
 To equal *three Months* of devouring *War*

Great was the Straight poor *David* now was in
 (Ah! *What but Straights attends presumptuous Sin!*)
 Which of the Three to choose, he's unprepar'd,
 To choose was *Favour* : But the *Choice* was *hard*.

Famine the Land had felt too late before :
 That too would *first* and *most*, affect the *Poor*.
 Himself it would not reach ; to whom, he knew,
 The *Rod* was chiefly, tho' not *only*, due.

Like Reason was of *War*. In Person He
 Might be, for *three Months* time, from Danger free.

O
Besides,

Besides, if *Israel* should be *beat*, and fly
So long and oft: it might the *Enemy*
Embolden, of their Strength, or Cause, to *boast* ;
And to *blaspheme* the Lord, the God of Hosts.

These therefore wav'd, the King resolv'd, at last,
Himself into the *Hand of God* to cast.
Into the Hand of God, said he, let's fall ;
And humbly unto him for *Mercy* call.
His Mercy's great. I, by Experience, know
He will, upon *Repentance*, Mercy show.
In him I trust. To him, distress I fly :
And on his *tender Mercies* I rely.
But let me not into the Hands of Man
Be cast: for he will do the *worst* he can.

The *Choice* this made, the *Pestilence* is sent
Throughout the Land ; the *Angel* swiftly went,
Waving his *flaming* Sword, whereby there fell
Seventy Thousand Men in *Israel*,
In three Days Time. But when the Angel came
To shake his *Blade* against *Jerusalem*,
(The Royal City, the Imperial Seat,
The *Cabinet* of what was *choice* and *great*)
The *mournful* King, with *Israel's* Elders, clad
In *Sack-Cloth*, with their Countenances *sad*,
Fell on their Faces at the dreadful Sight
Of that *devouring* Blade, stretch'd out, to smite
The People: and the *trembling* King thus pour'd,
His Supplication forth before the Lord.

‘ Ah !

' Ah! *am not I the Man*, that gave Command
 ' The People should be number'd thro' the Land?
 ' 'Tis even I, that did this Sin commit,
 ' O that I *only*, suffer might for it!
 ' On me, and on my House, O Lord, I pray,
 ' Be pleas'd, for what remains, thy Hand to lay!
 ' But not upon the People in this City.
 ' Oh! on these harmless Sheep, I pray have Pity;
 ' And let not them be plagu'd for my Offence:
 ' Accept my Pray'r. Regard their Innocence:

This earnest Supplication Heaven pierc'd,
 And the Remainder of the Doom revers'd.
 The Lord, repenting, to the Angel said;
It is enough. Now let thine Hand be staid.

The Angel stood, when this *blest Word* was given
 By Ornan's Threshing-Floor, 'twixt Earth & Heaven.
 And Ornan (or *Araunab*) when he spy'd
 The Angel, ran, with his four Sons, to hide.

But *David*, be'ng by *Gad* instructed, went
 To buy the Threshing-Floor, with full Intent
 To rear an *Altar*, in that very Place
 Unto the Lord; and there to seek his Face.

Araunab, looking forth, and see'ng the King
 Approaching, on the Ground himself did fling,
 The Cause enquiring, which had brought him there:
 Which, in so great a Prince, must great appear.

My Business, answer'd *David*, is to buy
Of thee thy *Threshing-Floor*, that thereon I
May raise an *Altar* to the Lord, and see
If by *Peace-Offerings*, he appeas'd will be.
That so, his just Displeasure b'ing allay'd,
The *Plague*, inflicted on us, may be stay'd

O, said *Araunab*, let my Lord the King
Accept the Ground: thou needest nothing bring.
The *Oxen* for *Burnt-Offerings*; and the *Wheat*,
Accept, for the *Meat-Off'ring*; I intreat!
The *Threshing Instruments* may serve the Turn,
Instead of *Wood*, the Off'rings to burn,
And mayst thou by the Lord accepted be
As sure, as these are *freely* giv'n by me.

Nay, hold, said *David*, do not think that I
A begging came? I came indeed to buy;
And buy I will; and that too at *full Price*.
What's not my own I will not Sacrifice.
Nor will I that, for which I give no Costs,
Pretend to offer to the Lord of Hosts.

The *Price* then set, and paid, an *Altar* there
King *David* to the Lord his God did rear:
And thereon offer'd to appease the Lord,
Burnt-Off'rings and Peace-Off'rings, and implor'd
His gracious Pardon. And the Lord, who knew
That *David's Heart* was *right*, his Sorrow *true*,
Vouchsaf'd to Answer him by *Fire*, which came
From Heav'n, upon the Altar, in a *Flame*.

By

By which he shew'd, his Anger was appeas'd :
And he, with *David's* Sacrifice, was pleas'd.

Thus ceas'd the Plague, with *Sev'nty Thousand* slain,
By which so many *fewer* did remain
To serve the King. And tho' the Lord thought fit,
To spare the *Man* that did the *Sin* commit.
Yet, in his *Kingly* State, in *Part* he dy'd ;
At least was wounded through his *Peoples* Side.
For *Kings* and *Subjects* are *Cor-Relatives* ;
The one must die, unless the other lives.
Herein, however, Divine Providence
Suited the *Punishment* to the *Offence* :
That since, of *Numbers*, *David* fain would boast,
He of his *Number* *Sev'nty Thousand* lost.

CH A P. VI.

A G E now, and the *Expence* of *Blood* in War,
to *Weakness* had reduc'd the King so far,
That, though against the Cold they did him arm
With store of *Cloths*, they scarce could keep him warm
Wherefore they for a fair young Virgin sought,
Whom, having found, unto the King they brought,
Her Name *Abishag*, she a *Sbunamite*,
Who on the King should wait, both *Day* and *Night*.
She stood at Hand, to serve him all the *Day* ;
And, when *Night* came, she in his *Bosom* lay :
Whereby her natural *Heat* she did impart
Unto the King ; which did refresh his Heart.

Thus led she a *Concubinary* Life :
Yet did the King not *know* her, as a Wife.

His eldest Son, then living, was a Prince
Of an aspiring Mind : who, ever since
The Death of *Abfalom*, himself did hold
Heir to the *Crown* : and thereupon grew bold.
His Name was *Adonijah*, which doth sound
A *ruling Lord* : and such he would be found.
A goodly Man, for Personage was he :
And from *Correction* had been always free.
For the King's *Lenity* to him was such,
He never had displeased him, so much
As but to say unto him, O my Son,
What is the Cause, thou so, or so hast done ?

He long had cast his Eye upon the *Throne*,
As *counting*, if not *calling* it, his own,
And reckon'd he sustain'd no little Wrong,
In that his Father sate upon't so long.
But now, his Father's *Age*, and *feeble* State,
Made him resolve, he would no longer wait ;
But take possession of the *Royal Crown* :
Ascend the *Throne*, and *thrust* his Father down.

In order thereunto, he did provide
Chariots and Horsemen (for both *Guard* and *Pride*)
And *Fifty* Men, who should before him run ;
Like as his Brother *Abfalom* had done.

Then

Then into the *Conspiracy* he drew
Joab, his Father's Gen'ral ; who, he knew,
 Among the Soldie'ry great Interest had ;
 And to his Cause, could Strength and Credit add.
Abiathar, the Priest, he also got
 To joyn with him ; and *consecrate his Plot*.

Both he and *Joab* had stood right before,
 When *Abfalom* rebell'd : and to restore
 The King, they labour'd hard, unto his Crown.
 What pity 'twas they now *the Pail kick'd down*.

Joab, indeed, some Colour might pretend
 For his *Defection*. He might apprehend,
 (Not without Reason) since he lost his Place,
 He stood but *loosly* in the Royal Grace.

But for the Priest, no Cause, as yet we see ;
 Which might, in his Excuse, alledged be :
 Unless it were, what among such doth run,
 An Aptness to *adore the Rising Sun*.
David declin'd apace ; ready to *set*.
 Young *Adonijab* ready *up to get*.

The Plot now being ripe, the Time at hand,
 Wherein he meant all *Israel* to command ;
 He made a *Royal Feast* : fat Cattle slew,
 Both Sheep and Oxen ; and to it he drew
 His Brethren the King's Sons (e'en ev'ry one
 Of them, excepting only *Solomon*)

And with them *Joab* and *Abiathar* :
 And all the Men of *Judah*, though they were
 The King's own Servants : and with them too most
 Of the brave *Captains* of his Father's Host ;
 Who, when the Wine their Spirits did inflame,
 Should *Adonijah*, for their King, *proclaim*.

Just in the Nick, the Prophet *Nathan* got
 The Knowledge of this execrable Plot :
 And wisely weighing, how he might prevent
 The dire Effects thereof, away he went
 Unto Queen *Bathsheba* ; and her surpriz'd
 With the Relation of it : then advis'd
 Her, to the King immediately to go,
 And open, to the King, the Matter so,
 That he the Danger deeply in may take ;
 And, to prevent it, due Provision make.
 And, added he, whilst thou yet speaking art
 Unto the King, I'll come and take thy Part.
 Then her instructing, how she should begin
 The Matter ; he *withdrew* : and she went in.

Come to the Presence of the King, she bow'd,
 (After such Manner as they then allow'd)
 And, being by the King ask'd, *What she would* ?
 She in such Terms as these, her Bus'ness told.
 ' Thou once, my Lord, unto thine Handmaid swear,
 ' By the Almighty (who doth Witness bear)
 ' That, after thee, thy Servant *Solomon*
 ' Should Reign, and sit upon his Father's Throne,
 ' Yet

- ‘ Yet now, behold *Adonijab* doth reign :
‘ And he hath Oxen, and fat Cattle, slain
‘ In great Abundance, and a Feast hath made :
‘ To which thine other Sons are all betray’d,
‘ That they may own his Title : Th’ only one
‘ Excluded, is thy Servant *Solomon*.
‘ But, upon thee, my Lord O King, the Eyes
‘ Of *Israel* are ; that thou, before thou dies,
‘ Should’st plainly tell them *Who*, when thou art
 gone
‘ Shall thee succeed upon thy Royal Throne.
‘ Which, if to do, my Lord the King should fail,
‘ And *Adonijab*’s Treason should prevail :
‘ When thou, my Lord, shalt with thy Fathers sleep,
‘ (The Thought whereof occasions me to weep)
‘ It then shall come to pass, *Offenders* we,
‘ My Son and I, shall then reputed be.’

While she yet spake, the Prophet *Natban* came
Into the *Anti-Chamber* ; and, his Name,
Sent in, he did for quick Admittance sue :
And, being introduc’d, the Queen withdrew.

The Prophet quickly his Obeisance made,
And to the King, in Haste, abruptly said,
‘ Dost thou, my Lord O King, indeed ordain
‘ That *Adonijab*, after thee, shall Reign ?
‘ Or hast thou said, When I to Rest am gone,
‘ I will that he shall sit upon my Throne ?
‘ For he, this Day, hath made a royal Feast,
‘ And to it hath invited many a Guest ;

‘ All

‘ All the King’s Sons (except Prince *Solomon*)
 ‘ Unto his Feast, at his Request are gone,
 ‘ And *Joab*, with the Captains of the Host,
 ‘ He doth *carefs*; not sparing any Cost :
 ‘ Nor is *Abiathar* the Priest, the least
 ‘ Among his Guests ; to *blefs the trait’rous Feast*.
 ‘ All whom that he may richly entertain,
 ‘ Fed Cattle in Abundance he hath slain.
 ‘ They Eat, Drink, Sing, loud Acclamations give ;
 ‘ And cry, *Long may King Adonijah live*.

‘ But me, thy Servant, and thy brightest Son
 ‘ (Best of thy Sons) the brave Prince *Solomon*,
 ‘ He hath not call’d, nor *Zadock*, the good Priest,
 ‘ Nor yet *Benajah*, to his treach’rous Feast.
 ‘ Is this Thing, by my Lord’s Appointment done,
 ‘ And to thy Servant, *it* thou hast not shown ?
 ‘ Or hath aspiring *Adonijah* chose
 ‘ This Time, to *seize the Crown, and thee depose ?*

He stopt. But what had been already said,
 On *David*’s Mind, a deep Impression made.
 He had not yet the sad Effects forgot,
 Of his Son *Absalom*’s disloyal Plot ;
 How *hard* it with him went ; what Dangers he
 Was in ; how he was fain for Life to *flee* :
 Which now (so weak he was) he could not do ;
 But must, whate’re befel him undergo.
 He therefore to this Sore, resolv’d t’ apply
 A *speedy, and effectual* Remedy.

He

He therefore said, call *Bathsheba* to me:
 She soon appear'd with awful Modesty,
 And stood before him (*Nathan* out was gone
 Leaving the King and *Bathsheba* alone,)
 To whom the King thus spake (and with an Oath
 Did what he said confirm, between them both.)

- ‘ As lives the Lord, who hath redeemed me
- ‘ From all Distress, I now declare to thee,
- ‘ As I engaged solemnly before,
- ‘ When by the God of *Israel* I swore,
- ‘ Assuring thee, that *Solomon*, thy Son,
- ‘ Should me succeed, and sit upon my Throne:
- ‘ That will I certainly perform this Day;
- ‘ Thine Eye shall see it done without Delay.’

The *Queen*, most humble Rev’rence having made,
 Only, *Long live my Lord King David*, said.
 By which, we may suppose, she wish’d that he
 Might still Reign on; and be from Troubles free.

But he, upon the Matter more intent,
 For *Zadock*, *Nathan*, and *Benajah* sent,
 To whom he gave in Charge that they should strait
 Take of his Servants, both for *Strength* and *State*,
 Sufficient Numbers; and should cause his Son
 (The Lord’s Belov’d, *Jediah*) *Solomon*,
 On the King’s Mule, in Royal Pomp, to ride
 (The *Priest* and *Prophet* walking by his Side,
 With Royal Guards before him and behind,
 And all the People, that were well inclin’d)

Until

Until they came to *Guibon's* little Stream,
Which from the Court parted *Jerusalem*.
Let *Zadock* there, and *Nathan*, him Anoint ;
For him I, King o'er *Israel*, appoint,
Said *David*, in my Stead, upon my Throne
To sit ; and henceforth take it for *his own*.

And when he is Anointed, forthwith sound
The Trumpet, and let all the People round,
With joyful Acclamations, call upon
The Lord, and say, *God save King Solomon*.
Then bring him up, that he, as I ordain,
May over *Israel* and *Judab* Reign.

Amen, reply'd *Benajah* : and, O may
Thy gracious God *Amen* unto it say.
As with my Lord the King, the Lord hath been,
So may he too with *Solomon* be seen :
And may *his* Throne transcend *thy* Throne as far,
As other Thrones to thine *inferior* are.

This said, away they all together go,
Zadock the Priest, *Nathan* the Prophet too ;
Captain *Benajah*, with the King's *Life-Guard*,
The *Cberethites* and *Peletbites*, prepar'd
The King's Command to execute : and those
To slay, who should them in the Work oppose.

The Priest, out of the Tabernacle, took
An *Horn* of Oil ; and down to *Gibon-Brook*

They

They lead Prince *Solomon*, in Royal State :
 Priest, Prophet, People, gladly on him wait.
 And there the Priest, upon his Princely Head,
 From out his *Horn*, the sacred *Oil* did shed.
 The Trumpet then was blown, and thereupon
 The People cry'd, *God save King Solomon*.
 Their Throats were then distended; and the Sound
 Of *Trumpets* was by that of *Voices*, drown'd.
 Triumphant Noises through the Air did break,
 And their *transporting* Joys did loudly speak.
 Such *Acclamations* made! Such *Shouts* were giv'n.
 As seem'd to rend the Earth, and pierce the *Heav'n*.

C H A P. VII

BY this Time *Adonijab*, and the Rest
 Who had been entertained at his Feast,
 Their Banquet past, were ready now to bring
 Him forth in Publick, to *Proclaim him King*;
 Buoy'd up with Confidence of their Success,
 A Priest attending them the Work to bless:
 And the old *Gen'ral Joab*, at their Head,
 The *Military Forces* up to lead.
 When, on a suddain, the rebounding Cries,
 Of *Solomon's* Attendance, them surprize.
 They heard; and started; and the more they hear,
 The more they're with *Amazement* struck, and *Fear*.
 What, said old *Joab* (when he heard the Sound
 Of *Trumpets*, and the Shouts which *Trumpets*
 drown'd) May

May we suppose the Cause of This to be?
The City in an Uproar seems to me.

While he yet spake, came one unto the Door
(Who had been proling out some Time before)
Jonathab (who was Son unto the Priest
Abiathar, of Traytors not the least)
Who having been abroad upon the Scout,
Had seen the Work the City was about.

Him *Adonijab* seeing, said come in,
And tell us what the Matter is. Begin :
For thou a Man of noted Valour art,
And usually Good Tidings dost impart :
Say, What's the Bus'ness? ' Ah, alas ! said he,
' My Tidings now will not be good to thee ;
' For verily, our Lord King *David* now
' Hath *Solomon* made King.' Then told him how,
Where, and by whom, it managed had been ;
And what, relating to't, he'd heard or seen.
Adding, the People's Joy, for their new King,
They so exprest, as made the City ring.
And that the Noise is, which ye now have heard :
The Cause of which is justly to be fear'd.
For *Solomon* now on the Throne doth sit ;
And doth to every one what he thinks fit.

At this Report the Guests were all afraid,
And *slit away* : Not one amongst them staid
With *Adonijab*. He, as well he might,
Deserted thus, fled, in a grievous Fright,

Unto

Unto the *Altar* : of its *Horns* laid hold,
 Hoping that *sacred Place* now (as of old
 It had to others done) might him protect,
 At least till he might other Means project,
 His *Pardon* to obtain. This being laid
 Before King *Solomon* ; he thereon said,
 If he himself a worthy Man will shew,
 There shall, for this, no Punishment ensue.
 But if hereafter, he again shall try
 Ill Practices against me, he shall die.

Then *Solomon* sent Messengers to bring
 Him, from the Altar, down unto the King ;
 He came, and to the King himself did Bow,
 Which shew'd he did his *Sovereignty* allow.
 The King dismissing him, this only said,
 Go to thy *House* : do well ; and ben't afraid.

This gentle Dealing, th' ancient King approv'd,
 No doubt ; because *Adonijah* he lov'd :
 And therefore, probably, was glad to see,
 In his *Successor*, so much *Lenity*.

Which made him (when his *Courtiers* came, to Wait
 Upon him, and with Joy, congratulate
 This great Deliv'rance) bow himself, and say

• Blest be the Lord, e'en *Israel's* God, this Day ;

• Who whilst I'm living, hath vouchsafed One

• Of mine own Sons, to sit upon my Throne.

The Sense whereof did make this godly King,

Unto the Lord, his *Nunc dimittis* sing.

And

And now, the Days of *David* drawing nigh,
Wherein, by Course of Nature, he should die:
He of King *Solomon* his Leave did take ;
And unto him he thus, at parting spake.

‘ *I go the Way of all the Earth*, said he ;
‘ Be strong, and let the Man appear in thee.
‘ God’s sacred Charge observe throughout thy Days,
‘ And walk uprightly in his holy Ways ;
‘ His *Statutes* keep ; his high Commands obey ;
‘ His *Judgments* dread ; his *Doctrines* all display :
‘ That in whate’er thine Hand doth undertake,
‘ Thou mayst the Lord to thee *Propitious* make.
‘ Then will the Lord confirm his Word, which he
‘ Most graciously did speak concerning me :
‘ When he, some Years ago, was pleas’d to * say,
‘ If thine shall take good Heed unto their Way,
‘ With all their Heart, and all their Soul to walk
‘ In Truth before me (Justice never baulk)
‘ Then shalt thou never want a favour’d Son,
‘ To sit upon the *Israelitish* Throne.’

This said, he *Solomon* Instruction gave
How he hereafter, should himself behave
To some, who had from their *Allegiance* swerv’d :
And others, who of him had well deserv’d :
Then having seen full Threescore Years and Ten,
And Forty passed in a glorious Reign,
He with his Fathers *slept*, and was interr’d,
In his own City, which he most preferr’d ;

And

And which, to honour him, thenceforth became,
 The *royal Sepulchre* for Men of Fame.
 And now my *Muse*, might she so high presume,
 Would write this *Epitaph* upon his Tomb.

E P I T A P H.

Here lies King David, whose sharp Sword did quell
 The fiercest Enemies of Israel.

Here the Sweet Singer lies, whose various State,
 The Psalms by him composed, do relate.

Here lies the Man, who (for the greatest Part)
 Did walk according to the Lord's own Heart.

His Body in the Grave below doth Rest;

His Spirit lives above, among the Blest.

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